

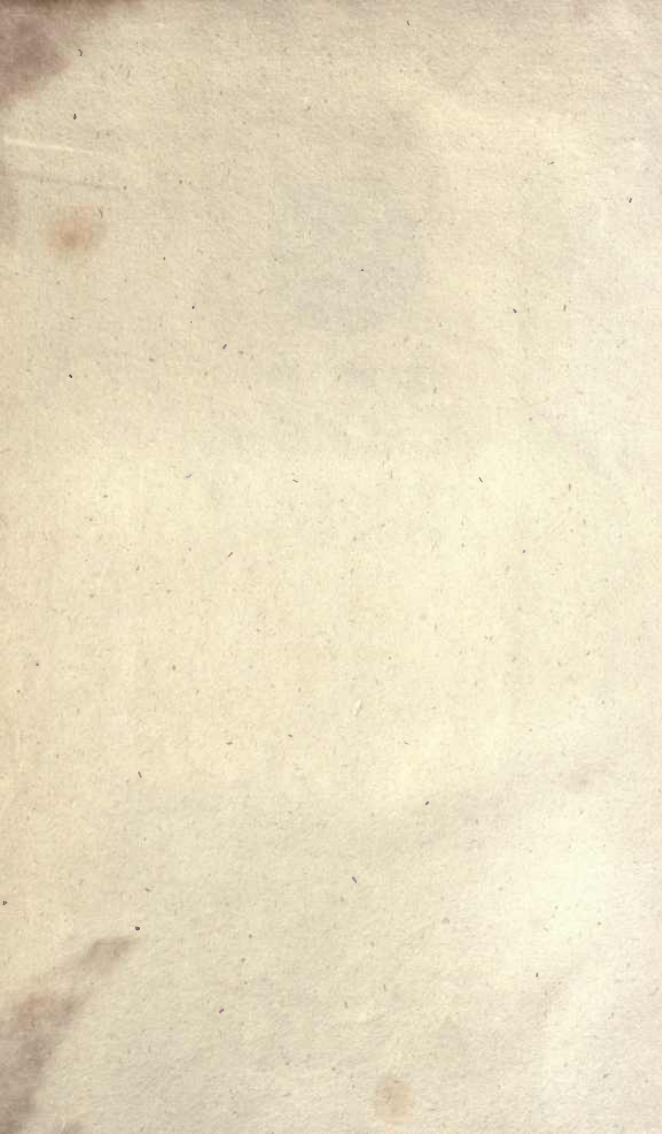
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HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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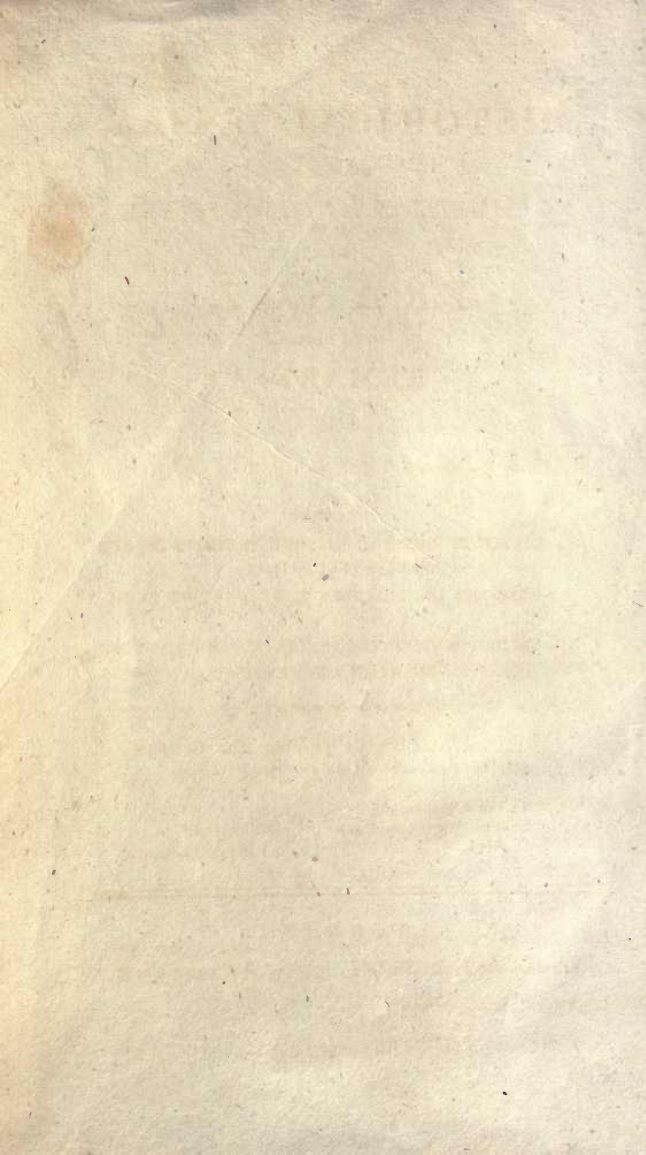
REMAINS

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REMAINS



*Woodhouse 1797-*

AN

# HISTORICAL ESSAY

ON THE

*AMBITION and CONQUESTS*

OF

## FRANCE,

WITH SOME

### REMARKS

ON THE

## FRENCH REVOLUTION.

CONTAINING

- 1.—SKETCH OF GENERAL HISTORY PREVIOUS TO THE  
FRENCH REVOLUTION;
- 2.—REMARKS ON THE FRENCH REVOLUTION FROM  
1789 to 1791;
- 3.—ABRIDGEMENT OF THE HISTORY OF THE REVOLU-  
TION FROM 1791 TO 1796.



————— Soldier, I had Arms —————  
Had Wealth, Dominion. Dost thou wonder, Roman,  
I fought to save them? What if Cæsar aims  
To lord it universal o'er the World,  
Shall the World tamely crouch at Cæsar's Footstool?

CARACTACUS; *Scene the last.*

---

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. DEBRETT, opposite Burlington House,  
Piccadilly.

1797.

(DRAWBACK.)

# HISTORICAL

CHAPTER

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REMARKS

## ON THE

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## HISTORICAL ESSAY, &amp;c.

**A**T this awful period, when the world is convulsed by unexpected revolutions, and when Britain appears suspended between the alternative of unsuccessful war, or dishonourable peace, it is no wonder if violent declamations should be uttered against the supposed authors of a war, the grounds and nature of which are not generally understood.

Many skilful hands have alternately applauded and attacked the internal principles of the French Revolution: the object of the present treatise is, to consider its external relations with the other nations of Europe, and trace its remote connections

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with



with past events. The indulgence of the reader is demanded for some apparent digression, as the different subjects are unavoidably involved together.

It is the sincere belief of the author of this Essay, that the French Revolution, abstracted from other consequences, may be considered as one means of attaining that end, that aim of universal empire, so often the terror of Europe, which sometimes has been attributed to Spain, sometimes to France, and which France would willingly impute to England.

*Universal Empire* is, in itself, an extravagant expression, and was so even in the proudest days of ancient Rome. But let it be taken in this confined sense, that there exists a sovereign, or a nation, who expect to unite the greatest part of Europe in an empire almost as extensive as the Roman, or at least as the empire of Charlemain: in such a sense it is not an impossible project; there is reason to believe, that both Spain and France have at times hoped for its attainment; and it were  
easy

easy to prove, that England is disqualified from it by an insular situation, supposing our ambition to be ever so wickedly insatiable.

Let not the reader be surprised to hear, that in order accurately to comprehend the ground-work of those ambitious projects, which have so often desolated Europe, he must go back to an æra in the English history, previous to the accession of the house of Tudor.

In the latter end of the century 1400, the great sovereigns of Europe had begun to shake off the yoke of the feudal system, and having subdued their turbulent Barons, began to think of increasing their power at the expence of their neighbours. The object of Spain was, first the conquest of Granada, and secondly that of Italy : the principal object of France was, the ruin of the great and powerful house of Burgundy ; and, indeed, the temptation was almost irresistible, considering the provocations given and received on both sides.

On the other hand the princes of Burgundy and of Flanders had ever been considered as the natural allies of England.

Although the phrase of the balance of power is, perhaps, of later invention, the principle still existed, and it was even then generally believed by the English, that to permit one single power to possess the whole sea-coast, with all its navigable rivers, from the Pyrenees to the German ocean, would be an error of the most fatal consequence to the trade and security of England.

Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, was, at that time, possessed of dominions which might well deserve the name of a powerful kingdom.

The duchy of Burgundy, in France, the country of Burgundy, generally called Franche Comté, and all those seventeen rich provinces of the Netherlands, since divided into the Spanish low-countries, and the once powerful Republic of the United Provinces. Of these seventeen provinces, some, (as Flanders and Artois) were held

as fiefs of France; the greater part were held as fiefs of the empire, and their native dukes and counts had been gradually dispossessed by the house of Burgundy. Philip had increased his empire by actions, which the impartial eye of history must consider as usurpations; but the honourable title of *Good*, which his subjects bestowed on him, proves, that he extenuated his injustice by a tender regard to the welfare of those he governed. The events that accompanied and followed the death of Charles, Philip's only son, are well related by Hume; and for many reasons it appears advisable to give them in that great historian's own words.

“ This prince, (Charles Duke of Bur-  
 “ gundy) possessed all the ambition and  
 “ courage of a conqueror, but being defec-  
 “ tive in policy and prudence, qualities no  
 “ less essential, he was unfortunate in all  
 “ his enterprises, and perished at last in  
 “ battle against the Swiss, a people whom  
 “ he despised, and who, though brave and  
 “ free, had hitherto been in a manner over-  
 “ looked in the general system of Europe.

“ This event, which happened in the year  
 “ 1477, produced a great alteration in the  
 “ views of all the princes, and was attended  
 “ with consequences which were felt for  
 “ many generations.\*

“ Charles left only one daughter, Mary,  
 “ by his first wife ; and this princess, being  
 “ heir to all his opulent and extensive do-  
 “ minions, was courted by all the poten-  
 “ tates of Christendom, who contended for  
 “ the possession of so rich a prize.

“ Lewis, the head of her family, might,  
 “ by a proper application, have obtained  
 “ this match for the dauphin, and have  
 “ thereby united to the crown of France  
 “ all the provinces of the low countries,  
 “ together with Burgundy, Artois, and Pi-  
 “ cardy, which would at once have ren-  
 “ dered his kingdom an over-match for his  
 “ neighbours. But a man wholly interested  
 “ is as rare, as one entirely endowed with  
 “ the opposite qualities ; and Lewis, though  
 “ impregnable to all the sentiments of ge-

\* It might be added : They are felt at this present  
 moment at the distance of 319 years.

nerosity



“ enmity and friendship, was, on this oc-  
 “ casion, carried from the road of true po-  
 “ licy by the passions of animosity and re-  
 “ venge. He had imbibed so deep a hatred  
 “ of the house of Burgundy, that he chose to  
 “ subdue the princess by arms, rather than  
 “ unite her to his family by marriage. He  
 “ conquered the duchy of Burgundy, and  
 “ that part of Picardy which had been  
 “ ceded to Philip the Good by the treaty  
 “ of Arras. But he forced the states of the  
 “ Netherlands to bestow their sovereign on  
 “ Maximilian of Austria, son of the em-  
 “ peror Frederic, from whom they looked  
 “ for protection in their present distresses.  
 “ And by these means France lost the op-  
 “ portunity which she never could recover,  
 “ of making that important acquisition of  
 “ power and territory.

“ During this interesting crisis, Edward  
 “ was no less defective in policy, and was  
 “ no less actuated by private passions, un-  
 “ worthy of a sovereign and a statesman.  
 “ Jealousy of his brother Clarence had  
 “ caused him to neglect the advances which  
 “ were made of marrying that prince,

“ (now a widower) to the heirefs of Bur-  
 “ gundy, and he ſent her propoſals of  
 “ eſpouſing Anthony, Earl of Rivers, bro-  
 “ ther to his queen, who ſtill retained an  
 “ entire aſcendant over him. But the match  
 “ was rejected with diſdain; and Edward,  
 “ reſenting this treatment of his brother-in-  
 “ law, permitted France to proceed with-  
 “ out interruption, in her conqueſts over  
 “ his defenceleſs ally. Any pretence ſuf-  
 “ ficed him for abandoning himſelf to in-  
 “ dolence and pleaſure, which were now  
 “ become his ruling paſſions.”

*Hinc illæ lachrymæ!* This fatal pe-  
 riod kindled the hatred between France and  
 the houſe of Auſtria, and three hundred  
 years have proved inſufficient to extinguiſh  
 it. Mr. Hume has made obſervations on  
 the averſion of the Engliſh people againſt  
 the French, which ſhew that he thinks it  
 illiberal, and does not believe it to be reta-  
 liated by the French, whoſe jealouſy is di-  
 vided between a greater number of objects.  
 The following ſeems to me a fairer ſtate-  
 ment: that the French have two primary  
 objects of averſion, England and the houſe  
 of

of Austria, and a few secondary ones, amongst their petty neighbours, which interfere but little with their inveterate animosity towards the only powers who have ever arrested their efforts to extend the limits of their empire.

It is easy to cry out with modern declaimers, that this ambition to increase the French empire was a vice inherent in their kings, but it has much more the appearance of a vice inherent in the restlessness of the French nation. There is not a French historian, however independent of court favour, who does not lament the loss of that opportunity, which (in Mr. Hume's time) they had never recovered; and scarcely a geographer, who will not tell his readers, that the Rhine and the Northern ocean were the limits of the ancient Gaul, and hint, that they are the natural limits of modern France.

A remark is to be made on the preceding passage of Hume, which will prove of some consequence when we reflect on the grounds of the present war. Hume was a cold-hearted sceptical writer, who had but one visible predilection, that of justifying the

the house of Stuart, at the expence of all their predeceffors, and of the ancient constitution of England. The Stuarts were in general remarkably unwilling to engage in continental wars, and therefore his predilection might have inclined him to excuse a fimilar pacific indolence in Edward. Yet he joins the universal stream of historians in blaming that prince for deserting his old alliances with Flanders and Burgundy ; and the same principle leads him to condemn Henry VII. for tamely allowing Charles VIII. to espouse the heirefs of Brittany. This principle has been already stated, and must never be forgot, that we lose in great measure the benefit of an insular situation, if all the extent of coast which bends round our protecting seas, is united under the same dominion. Since this principle could deeply strike an author, whose partiality in favour of the Stuarts, and whose dislike to King William, might have led him to a contrary opinion, it must be allowed to have so far the semblance of truth, that a virtuous minister, or an independent member of parliament, may act upon it from patriotic uncorrupt motives.

The

The die was now cast, the sparks were now lighted which were to break forth in future conflagrations ; but the eagerness of Charles VIII. and Lewis XII. to engage in schemes of Italian conquest, suspended for some years hostilities on the side of Flanders. It was in the time of Francis I. that the smothered fire of dissension blazed out in all its fury, between the rival houses of Austria and of Bourbon.

By a long series of untimely deaths, the vast inheritance of Castille and Arragon, comprehending still more vast expectations in the new world, had fallen to the young Archduke Charles, who was also the representative, by his grandmother, Mary, of the House of Burgundy, and by his grandfather, Maximilian, of the House of Austria. Francis and Charles, each proud of their extensive dominions, entered the lists as candidates for the Imperial crown. The Electors of Germany preferred the House of Austria, and from that time a most implacable hatred commenced between those two rivals, and war, with few interruptions, and various successes, desolated



lated Europe during their joint lives. In the end, Francis was obliged to renounce his pretensions to Italy ; but in all other respects, the advantages of France, arising from its compact shape, and central situation, contrasted with the disjointed sovereignties that encompass it, were demonstrated almost as clearly as in the present war.

Charles V. worn out with age and fatigue, gave one of those examples of satiated and disgusted ambition, which are sometimes found in the annals of monarchy, never in those of republicanism. He first divided, and then resigned his extensive empire, which he had found too extensive even for his own capacious mind. All the German dominions, with the Imperial crown, fell to his moderate and tolerating brother, the Archduke Ferdinand. Happy would it have been had he included the Netherlands within that noble gift, which he might have done with the more propriety, as the German publicists ever called them the circle of Burgundy, and considered them as part of the German empire. But his

his stern and haughty soul retained to the last, so great a love for those scenes where he had passed the innocent hours of childhood, and so great a value for those provinces which had first hailed him as their sovereign, that he could not bear to deprive his only son of so dear a treasure. Whilst he destroyed the liberties of Spain, to the Flemish he had behaved like the chief magistrate of a free commonwealth, he fondly hoped that Philip would follow his example; and he unwittingly signed the irreparable ruin of the Netherlands when he signed the act which gave them to the most tyrannical and intolerant of men.

The bad heart of Philip could not be said to *love* any nation, but he did not *hate* the Spaniards; and he seems to have perfectly abhorred all his other subjects.

The vices of a king can do little harm unless they are seconded by the vices of his people; and, unfortunately, the Spaniards were disposed to tyrannize as well as their master. Some Flemish favourites of

Charles had been deservedly odious to them, and they now seized the joyful opportunity of retaliating on the people. Religious and political hatred joined their destructive fires; a schism began which not only rent away part of the Spanish dominions, but separated the Belgic provinces from each other, and left them in that divided state which always proves an invitation to ambitious conquerors.

Whilst the impolitic ambition of Philip weakened that empire which he sought to enlarge, the gloomy cruelty which marked its progress excited more fear and hatred than the more generous ambition of Charles, who yet was nearer realizing the vision of an universal empire over Europe. From that period it became the interest of all the secondary powers of Europe to weaken Spain, but though the principle was right in itself, it was ultimately carried to a dangerous excess.

France was at that time in no condition to take the lead in so great an undertaking. Weakened on the side of Italy by the unsuccessful

successful wars of Francis, it had also been weakened on the side of Flanders by the defeat at St. Quentin, in the reign of Henry II. and the untimely death of that monarch, leaving his kingdom exposed to the dangers of long minorities, and consequently harrassed by civil and religious wars, it became for many years an object of compassion rather than of terror. During that period the national hatred of the English against the French was suspended and lost in their hatred against the Spaniards, and I defy the most malicious French historian to prove that the English nation took any unfair advantage of the distresses of its ancient rival.

Perhaps no English monarch had so little to fear from his neighbours as Henry VIII. because at no time were the rival powers on the continent so equally balanced. His daughter, Elizabeth, had a much more difficult task on her hands, and any error that she had committed might have proved fatal. A crisis was more than once on the point of taking place, the complicated difficulties of which might have baffled her prudence  
and



and that of Lord Burleigh, as the present crisis seems to have baffled Mr. Pitt. This crisis deserves to be considered, for it will shew that the ultimate views of France, even in the hour of distress, were still the same.

In 1571, Coligni, tired and repenting of civil war, even in the cause of liberty and religion, listened to the delusive allurements of Catherine de Medicis, and fondly hoped to unite the parties that divided France under one common standard. But it is material (in the present situation of things) to observe, that according to Thuanus, Sully, and all the impartial historians, it was not peace and tranquillity which his aged voice recommended to his distracted countrymen; he aimed at turning their deadly hatred into another channel, at bending their weapons against a foreign enemy, and kindling a war with the House of Austria, as fierce as any war undertaken at the mere pleasure of a king. He was deceived into the hands of his enemies by the false assurances, that Charles XI. had agreed to his plans, and determined to begin



gin a war by reclaiming Artois and Flanders as fiefs of the French monarchy. When once his good fortune had carried him thus far, it is not likely that he would not have stopped in the brilliant career of conquest; and Elizabeth might have been embarrassed between the old political axiom—*Do not suffer France to extend her dominion to the Northern seas*,—and the new principle—*weaken the house of Austria by every possible means*.

The evil genius of France prevailed; Charles, after some moments of irresolution, preferred the assassination of Protestants to open war with Catholics; all nations stood aghast at the dreadful massacre of St. Barthelemi; an universal odium was thrown upon the Popish religion, and Protestants, forgetting national jealousies, thought only of resisting a faith which delighted in treachery and murder.

Some years afterwards, in the reign of Henry III. this project for aggrandizing France was taken up in a new shape. The tyranny of Philip and his viceroy, Alva,

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had.

had united both Catholics and Protestants in one general revolt; and the Duke of Anjou, youngest son of Henry II. flattered himself that they would chuse him for their sovereign, with the additional hope of espousing Elizabeth. An immense increase of power might thus have accrued to the French empire, for Henry III. had no children, his brother was his lawful heir, and it was a maxim of the old French monarchy, that whatever a prince of the blood possessed was, on his accession, united inalienably to the crown, and the royal prerogative itself was insufficient to sever it. Similar to this is the maxim asserted by the French Directory concerning the effect of a decree of re-union; and the farther we proceed, the more plainly shall we see that the old monarchy and the new republic are actuated by the self-same spirit.

The Duke of Anjou, however, had neither virtue nor abilities suited to the vast scheme he had undertaken. He was indeed declared Duke of Brabant, but soon lost the affection of his new subjects; he received no succours from his brother, who feared  
and

and hated him, nor from Elizabeth, who did not really intend to marry him, and who probably as little intended that he should unite the Netherlands to France. Her deceitful conduct to that prince does not redound to her honour ; I only mention it as a presumption that she never lost sight of the old English policy, to watch with apprehension the aggrandizement of the neighbouring powers.

This unhappy prince died in 1584, overcome with mortification and disappointment ; his death exposed France to all the miseries attending a disputed succession, and many years elapsed before it could again lift up its head and entertain proud hopes of dominion. Meanwhile seven provinces of the Netherlands formed themselves into a republic under the generalship of the Prince of Orange, the other ten were gradually reconquered by Spain. Philip II. sensible of their aversion to the Spaniards, pretended to bestow them as an independent sovereignty on his daughter Isabella, married to the Archduke Albert, but under such conditions as plainly shewed

his intention to re-unite them to the Spanish crown, which accordingly happened after the death of Isabella.

Elizabeth, in this long interval, sometimes assisted the Dutch and the Flemings in their struggles for liberty; sometimes assisted the house of Bourbon, and sent English troops to place Henry IV. on the throne of France, from the same principle that made our ministry assist the present royalists—the dread of a common enemy implacable to both parties. There were not wanting English politicians at that period who thought that Elizabeth did not interfere with sufficient energy in continental affairs.

The reader in particular may be referred to a letter of Lambarde,\* a learned man, and in those days a celebrated topographer, who asserts, that if Flanders falls into the hands of the Queen's enemies, the trade and manufacture of England will be lost,

\* Published by Nicholls, at the end of the 2d vol. of Queen Elizabeth's Progresses.

“ and her Majesty may look in vain for  
 “ any customs to be paid.” This letter  
 is mentioned because it forms one link of  
 a chain of proofs, that not the tools of a  
 court, but independent, learned, reflecting  
 men have most strongly professed their opi-  
 nion of the importance of Flanders.

Elizabeth died in 1604 : her successor,  
 James, was of a pacific temper, inattentive  
to continental affairs, and despised by the  
English on that very account. In his  
 reign France recovered all her losses under  
 the splendid government of Henry ; he had  
 brought the finances into order, through  
 the prudence of Sully, and having pro-  
 vided himself both with money and troops,  
 was preparing to fall on the house of  
 Austria with all the fury of long-delayed  
 vengeance, when the dagger of an assassin  
 suddenly laid prostrate in the dust all the  
 towering schemes of ambition and heroic  
 valour.

This terrible catastrophe put a stop for  
 the present to that general war which  
 threatened all Europe. Mary de Medicis,



regent of France, even allied herself to Spain, and concluded a double inter-marriage between the two families, a connection which all patriotic Frenchmen looked upon with dislike.

About this period a new event revived the jealousies of moderate men. The elder Imperial branch of the house of Austria failed, and their hereditary dominions devolved on the archdukes of Inspruck, a branch which by no means inherited the virtues of their common ancestor, that good emperor, Frederic II. They were known to be ambitious, bigotted, and devoted to the dangerous society of Jesuits, and of course the Protestant princes of Germany were desirous to weaken their power. Frederic, Elector Palatine, was persuaded to accept the crown of Bohemia from the malecontents of that country; the Emperor easily expelled him, and, by way of retaliation, usurped the Palatinate, events which gave rise to that obstinate and bloody contest yet known in Germany by the name of the Thirty Years War.

Richelieu,

Richelieu, soon after its commencement, established his ascendancy over all other favourites at the French court, and acquired sovereign authority over that weak prince, Louis XIII. He persuaded him to enter with spirit into the project of weakening the house of Austria, which at first gave great satisfaction to the Protestants, and all the secondary princes of Europe. But insensibly the scene changed: impartial men saw reason to believe that France was pursuing its old schemes of conquest, under the pretence of defending liberty, and that a power was rising in Europe more formidable than the exhausted monarchy of Spain.

It would be tedious to recite all the various countries which Richelieu attempted to unite to France. The Spanish province of Catalonia was one, the duchy of Lorraine another. The house of Lorraine was never popular with the French government, and its ruin now become one of their secondary objects of policy. England took little interest in these remote transactions, Flanders was ever the country on which our jealous eyes were fixed.

The letters of the Earl of Strafford may be reckoned amongst the cotemporary documents, which give a curious picture of the gradual change which took place in English minds, on the relative danger to be apprehended from different foreign powers.

The following are some of the current opinions on daily news which his correspondents wrote from England to the absent statesman; a statesman who, with all his faults, had the security and commercial prosperity of England strongly at his heart.

“ This day we have letters come, that  
 “ Graveline is given up to the French,  
 “ which will make open war (meaning  
 “ between France and Spain) yet not ease  
 “ us. *For we are not out of as near a dan-*  
 “ *ger, that a growing state doth get har-*  
 “ *bours right against us.*

“ Here in London men’s fancies are di-  
 “ versely distorted and bent, some for the  
 “ one, and some for the other, (*i. e.* for  
 “ France or Spain) for my part, I am as in-  
 “ different as can be, but as the matter re-  
 “ flects

“ fleets upon my own country ; only *I would*  
 “ *have the scales kept even between them,*  
 “ *and that our nearest neighbour have still*  
 “ *a competency of strength, and not over-*  
 “ *grow us.*

“ Some conjecture that the French and  
 “ the Dutch will seek this summer to get  
 “ Dunkirk or Graveline ; *Ill neighbours,*  
 “ *perhaps, to England, if that should hap-*  
 “ *pen.*”

These were not the opinions of court-  
 lycophants, but of independent writers ;  
 of Howell, a retired literary man, and of  
 the more celebrated Sir Thomas Rowe, to  
 whom English commerce, as well as ra-  
 tional knowledge, are highly indebted.

Charles I. was not insensible to this new  
 species of danger which began to be felt by  
 some of his most enlightened subjects.  
 Without pretending to justify the general  
 conduct of that unhappy prince, it is yet  
 painful to reflect, that he owed the begin-  
 ning of his misfortunes to the very quality  
 which the enemies of Charles's memory  
 have



have admired in King William, a zeal to repress the growing ambition of France. The reader may find in Lord Clarendon, and other English historians, the details of the early intrigues of France with the Scotch covenanters, who would have been afraid of taking up arms without such powerful encouragement. Madame de Motteville's Memoirs is a work less known in England, and a few passages translated from that work may not be unsuitable. She is allowed by French critics to be good historical authority, and she had many conversations on English affairs with Henrietta Maria, who felt the strongest resentment against Richelieu's memory. The picture she gave to her confidante of the Cardinal's policy might apply word for word to the present times, only changing *cardinal* into *citizen*, Richelieu into Brissot or Condorcet, and perhaps Senneterre into Chauvelin or Autun.

“ The Cardinal de Richelieu\* had the  
 “ greatest fear of a neighbouring king, who  
 “ was powerful and peaceable at home, and

\* Memoires d'Anne d'Autriche, Vol. I. p. 248.

“ and



“ according to political maxims, which con-  
 “ sult interest rather than justice or benevo-  
 “ lence, he thought it quite necessary for the  
 “ good of France that such a prince should  
 “ be troubled in his own country. This in-  
 “ clination made him send the Marquis de  
 “ Senneterre ambassador to King Charles,  
 “ that he might endeavour to corrupt the  
 “ minds of the grandees and the people,  
 “ and spend a great deal of money in Lon-  
 “ don to infuse a spirit of revolt, in all  
 “ which he succeeded.”

The same female historian afterwards  
 quotes from the celebrated ambassador  
 d'Estrades, the provocation which con-  
 firmed Richelieu in his schemes of impla-  
 cable vengeance.

\* “ The Count d'Estrades was sent to  
 “ the King and Queen of England in 1637  
 “ from the late king and the cardinal. He  
 “ told me that the subject of his journey  
 “ was to oblige that prince to remain neu-  
 “ ter, if the King and the Prince of Orange

“ attacked the towns on the coast of Flan-  
 “ ders, and he shewed me his instructions  
 “ and all his dispatches.” She then pro-  
 ceeds to narrate how coldly d’Estrades’  
 offers of Richelieu’s friendship were re-  
 ceived by the queen, and ends her story  
 thus,—“ The queen answered, that as to  
 “ what he requested from the king, her  
 “ husband, she was not used to meddle  
 “ with affairs of that nature, but that she  
 “ would mention it to the king. She  
 “ afterwards told d’Estrades, that she had  
 “ received a thorough reprimand upon the  
 “ king her brother’s proposal of permitting  
 “ the coast of Flanders to be attacked, and  
 “ bid him go himself to King Charles.  
 “ He did go, and that prince upon hearing  
 “ the great offers made by the king and  
 “ cardinal, answered, that he would do all  
 “ in his power to shew his friendship, pro-  
 “ vided it was not prejudicial to his honour,  
 “ his interest, and the interest of his king-  
 “ dom; and that if the King of France or  
 “ the States attacked the maritime towns of  
 “ Flanders, he would keep his fleet in the  
 “ Downs to act in their defence, and have  
 “ fifteen

“ fifteen thousand men in readiness to pass  
 “ over the seas.”

Ill-fated Charles ! this spirited answer sealed thy doom with the relentless Frenchman ! The flame of insurrection soon broke out, and burnt so fiercely, that Richelieu no longer thought it needful to supply fresh fuel. Impartial authors of that time saw both the cause and consequence, though too late to be of service, as such passages as the following may shew. \* “ This French cardinal stirs up all the devils of hell against  
 “ Spain ; nay some will not stick to say,  
 “ that the breach ’twixt us and Scotland is a  
 “ reach of his. The old saying was, have  
 “ the Frenchman for thy friend, not for thy  
 “ neighbour. I believe these distractions  
 “ of our’s have been one of the greatest  
 “ advantages that could befall France, and  
 “ they happened in the most favourable  
 “ conjuncture of time that might be, else  
 “ he would never have as much as at-  
 “ tempted Dunkirk, for England in true  
 “ reason of state had reason to prevent

\* Howell’s Familiar Letters, Book I. Letter xlii.  
 and Book II. Letter xliii.

“ nothing

“ nothing more, in regard no one place  
 “ could have added more to the naval  
 “ power of France.” What would this  
 writer have said had he seen in the present  
 times, a knot of mungril Englishmen who  
 rejoice that France has not only Dunkirk,  
 but Ostend and the Scheld, nay even Flushing  
 itself?

That dark and subtle tyrant Richelieu  
 died without having the satisfaction to see  
 France completely triumphant, and Mazarin  
 inherited his power; a character less tyrannical,  
 but if possible still more cunning,  
 and equally adverse to every power that  
 presumed to set bounds to Gallic ambition.  
 Frederic Henry \* before his death grew  
 convinced that he had gone too far in  
 bringing almost home to his own country,  
 a neighbour more dangerous than Spain  
 itself. From that hour the French vowed  
 vengeance against the house of Nassau, and  
 have pursued their projects of destruction  
 under every varying government and ministry  
 for this century and a half.

\* See Le Clerc's *Histoire des Provinces-Unies* under  
 the year 1643.

The sincere conviction of the Dutch that the French were actuated by insatiable ambition, and that Spain was become pacific and tranquil, induced them first to send their deputies to Munster, in Westphalia, and then to conclude a separate peace with the Spaniards in June 1648. Cardinal Mazarin found that Spain could not be brought to the humiliating conditions that he required, and was accused by the French of seeking to plunder the public treasury on the pretence of an expensive war. He broke off therefore all treaty with Spain, but consented to a peace with the German branches of the house of Austria, and all the powers of Germany and the north, wearied with a tedious war, concluded their disputes by the famous treaty of Westphalia.

Germany then felt what inconveniencies attend the sad necessity of calling in foreigners to protect liberty. The French and the Swedes demanded an exorbitant price for vindicating the rights of the diet against the prerogatives of the emperor. Sweden received Pomerania, Bremen, and Verden,



Verden, but as it consented to be ranked amongst the members of the Germanic body, its usurpation was easily allowed. But the claims of France were much more mortifying, since it demanded Alsace, Metz, and Verdun, in pure and absolute sovereignty. The article of cession at last was worded in such ambiguous terms that it remained a continual source of dissension. At all events, however, the rights of the princes who had estates in Alsace, the rights of the nobility, and of the clergy, both Catholic and Lutheran, were reserved as sacred.

Though many powers of Europe were displeased with particular articles of the treaty of Westphalia, it has ever since been considered as the basis of the Germanic constitution, and a kind of *Magna Charta* to the central part of Europe. The ambition of France for territorial conquests was, however, so plainly demonstrated, that the jealousy of all the neighbouring powers never from that time was appeased.

The

The reader by only casting his eye over the map of Europe, may observe the infinite advantage of France over all her neighbours. They are all broken into small republics or principalities, and the powers who could have vied with the greatness of France are at so remote a distance, that she can send a thousand men into the field before her enemies can send five hundred. Nothing could have balanced so great a disparity, but a neighbouring sovereign as powerful as those Dukes of Burgundy, whose race was unfortunately extinguished in 1477. Even if Albert and Isabella had left descendants to inherit Flanders, the house of Burgundy would not have been revived. Its consequence originally depended on the union of seventeen rich provinces, and different principles of government and religion had disunited them for ever. Under one common chief, Antwerp and Amsterdam might have poured wealth and plenty on the state, and given security to the common center of government: but their mutual jealousies became irreconcilable, when Antwerp was devoted to po-

verty, that Amsterdam might alone enjoy riches.

Under these circumstances of Europe, it is not surprising that the inferior states began to look towards England as the only power that could balance the rising greatness of France. England had long been involved in civil wars, thanks to Richelieu's treacherous arts, and to Henrietta Maria's passion for meddling with state affairs, which she never understood! Soon after the peace of Westphalia, Cromwell obtained supreme dominion, and unfortunately Cromwell (it is agreed by our ablest authors) committed a most dangerous error in foreign politics. His selfish desire of money made him enter into a war with Spain, whose galleons he thought would afford him rich plunder, and thus he threw away the English strength and valour upon an old, infirm enemy, instead of watching a young and vigorous champion, just stepping forward to claim the palm of military glory. He even assisted Lewis XIV. in attacking that maritime coast of Flanders, which Charles I. would have defended

defended at all hazards ; but he somewhat repaired his mistake by keeping Dunkirk as an outpost for the English nation, and the cession of Dunkirk to France after the Restoration was the first act which hurt Charles the Second's popularity.

Previous to the Restoration, the famous treaty of Bidassée had concluded a war between France and Spain, which, like that of the empire, had lasted near thirty years. France discovered its views with more openness than ever, and made very great steps towards their entire attainment. Roussillon on the side of Spain, Artois on that of Flanders, were yielded by the Spaniards, and what was more, they gave in marriage to Lewis the eventual heirs of their empire, obliging her indeed to renounce her right, but it was well-known that the French considered such renunciations as void.

Cardinal Mazarin soon after dying, the young king assumed the reins of government, and employed himself in preparations for the great enterprises which he meditated. He gained an entire influence over De Witt

by the mutual jealousy which the French and the Lowestein party both entertained of the young Prince of Orange, and apparently took part with the Dutch in their first war against Charles II. but never gave them any important assistance. An expression is, however, said to have escaped him, which, if true, paints the very soul of a Frenchman. On hearing that the King of Denmark had also declared against England, he exclaimed, “ Now the English cannot see “ one friendly harbour from Bayenne to “ Bergen.” *This*, we may depend on it, is one great aim of all Frenchmen who think themselves patriots, whether monarchs or republicans ; and when they have destroyed the house of Austria, they will never be satisfied whilst an Englishman can cast his eyes on any shore that is not hostile.

In the year 1667 Philip IV. died, and left the crown of Spain to a weak sickly minor, Charles II. Then all the ambition of Lewis blazed forth at once, and struck the eyes of Europe with terror. He not only declared his contempt for his queen’s renunciations,



renunciations, but he claimed part of the Netherlands, on a pretence of the most unreasonable nature, even if no renunciation had taken place. The laws observed in the private successions of a few provinces, preferred the daughter by a first marriage to the son of the second wife, and Lewis affirmed, that this law governed the succession of their princes, although their history for the last three hundred years was adverse to this strange supposition. De Witt was startled at this event, and foresaw the misfortunes ready to fall on his country, as well as on Flanders. No state but England was able, effectually, to counteract the vast projects of Lewis. Charles was, for once, awakened to a sense of the duties incumbent on his situation, and signed, with Holland and Sweden, the famous triple alliance intended to check the conquests of France.

As the system of continental connections and alliances, in opposition to France, is founded in great measure on the sentiments and writings of the ambassador who signed that treaty, the philosophical Sir

William Temple, it is proper to survey the character and conduct of that remarkable man. He was endued with talents of a superior class, but they were accompanied by a constitutional indolence which gave a not-unpleasing negligence to his stile. His probity both in public and private life was unquestionable: he set no value on riches, but as they enabled a man to amuse himself with the elegant arts. Building, gardening, and study, were his favourite occupations; ease and tranquillity were, in his opinion, the chief happiness; moderation and temperance, the principal virtues, of man. Epicurus was his favourite philosopher, of whose morals\* he has written a very ingenious and plausible defence. But this partiality has laid him open to the accusation of secretly professing Epicurus' dangerous principles in religion; an accusation not likely, I fear, to injure him with the admirers of French principles, though it injured him greatly in the eyes of the pious Bishop Burnett, who says, that he had right principles in matters of government,

\* See the Essay on the Gardens of Epicurus.

but in nothing else. This censure is, however, too severe. Temple's principles of morality are good, though it has been doubted whether he built them on the only solid foundation, christianity. If we now inquire into his principles of government, they seem to have consisted in a desire to enjoy liberty and tranquillity united, in a fear of all innovation, and in the strongest jealousy of the power of France. He has said incidentally upon a naval officer\* chusing to be burnt with his ship rather than quit it; "whether or no it be wise in men  
 "to do such actions, I am sure it is wise  
 "in states to honor them." In a similar manner, I suppose, he reconciled his Epicureanism with his patriotism, and thought that enmity to France was wise in the state of England, although an individual for his private happiness should keep his soul in a state of pacific calmness.—A momentary ambition, however, drew him out from the gardens of Epicurus, and he hoped to immortalize his name by those everlasting bounds which the triple alliance was to have

\* Sir W. T. works, folio edition, vol. ii. page 40.

set to the conquests of France. But he soon had the mortification to find himself deceived by his own court, and reduced to suspect inwardly the most dangerous intentions in the king who had employed him. After some years interval, he stepped forth again into public life, when Charles endeavoured to recover his popularity by forming a council, of which Shaftsbury, Essex, and Temple, were the chiefs. He soon perceived the insincerity of all parties; he saw revolutions and civil contentions approaching with hasty strides, and he left for ever the career of public affairs, promising the king that he never would take part with one branch of the royal family against the other. He kept his word inviolably, and though he did not disapprove of the revolution of 1688, he had no share in the transaction; though he had loved and admired William, Prince of Orange, he would accept of no office from William, King of England. His son was of an active and unphilosophical turn, he took a part in business, he rashly engaged to William for Tírconnel's surrender of Ireland, and Tírconnel having deceived him, the unhappy youth



youth killed himself in a fit of despair. Temple bore this heavy loss with patience and resignation, and persisted to the end of his life in his old political tenets of union with Holland, and opposition to France, “unplaced, unpenfioned,” by the king, whose principles he supported. Indeed, what honors, what riches, could have compensated for the death of an only son!

I have taken this review of Sir William Temple's life, to shew that it is not likely that a man so disinterested, so dispassionate, and, indeed, so indolent, should have been the author of a political system so unlike his natural temper, if the most weighty and irresistible reasons had not forced him to own its necessity.

These reasons are scattered in divers places of his works; it is sufficient for the present purpose to observe, that he thought “any firm conjunction” of France or Holland, “either by confederacy or the submission of Holland, would prove the nearest

\* See folio edition, vol. i. pages 84-94.



“ approach that was ever made to our ruin  
 “ and servitude,” and doubted “ whether  
 “ it were possible (on the conquest of Flan-  
 “ ders by France) to defend ourselves in  
 “ war, either by our own forces or the al-  
 “ liances of our neighbours.” I would ad-  
 vise the philosophers of the present day to  
 consider well ere they pronounce an ana-  
 thema on the systems of so uncorrupted a  
 citizen and philosopher as Sir William  
 Temple.

It is now time to return to the deduction  
 of historical facts.

Lewis XIV. was rendered somewhat more  
 cautious by the intervention of the triple al-  
 liance, yet still succeeded in making a peace  
 with Spain, which greatly forwarded his  
 views of aggrandisement, since he kept Char-  
 leroi, Douai, Lille, Oudenarde, Furnes,  
 (near Dunkirk) and several other towns. His  
 ultimate aims were only deferred, not aban-  
 doned, and his present object was revenge  
 upon De Witt, and the Dutch, who had  
 presumed to stop his progress. To accom-  
 plish that purpose, it was necessary to gain  
 England,

England, and there his success was undoubted, from the inexplicable partiality of Charles II. to France, his aversion to the Dutch, and his false crooked policy. He signed with France that criminal treaty, by which he promised to declare himself a catholic, and assist Lewis to conquer Holland, whilst Lewis was to assist him in overturning the religion and liberties of England. The whole project was so impracticable, and Charles so immediately eluded the first article of changing his religion, that some have imagined his real scheme was to cheat France out of a few subsidies, and leave it engaged with Holland in a ruinous war. But such immoral means of executing his political ends deserved punishment, and amply met with it. His subjects, who suspected the worst intentions, thought themselves authorised to conspire against a king, who was himself no better than a conspirator. Lewis kept him all the rest of his life in a state of tame dependence, through fear lest a treaty should be published which might, perhaps, have authorized the English to *cashier* him, even in the eyes of those who cannot approve the latitude of

Dr.

Dr. Price's *cashiering doctrine*, for it went a great deal further than *misconduct*.

The joint war of England and France against Holland was declared in 1672, and with a success that seemed, at first, to carry all before it. The King of France came down upon Utrecht *like a land flood*, (to use Bishop Burnett's expression) and the terrified Hollanders sent deputies to treat. The same author observes that Lewis's wisest counsellors advised him to insist upon nothing more than the forts of Dutch Flanders and Dutch Brabant, which would look like moderation, and yet enable the French to surround Flanders on all sides. But Lewis's arrogance made him add such mortifying conditions, especially such as regarded the catholic religion, that the spirit of the Dutch arose, they stopped the progress of Lewis by inundations, and turned all their vengeance against the honest but mistaken De Witt, who had never conceived it possible that England and France would unite to conquer Holland.

The

The Dutch, beyond most nations, have acted upon Dr. Price's system of cashiering their rulers for misconduct, and framing new constitutions for themselves, and the consequences have not been such as should incline sensible persons to follow their example. As their constitution had not declared expressly that there should, or should not, be a chief magistrate in the commonwealth, there did not exist in the great body of the people an idea of sacredness affixed from early infancy to one or other form of government. Consequently there arose two parties openly attached to these two different forms, each grounding itself on plausible reasons, each more zealous for its favorite system than for the general welfare. William II. had abused his power, and his untimely death gave occasion to exclude his infant son, and abolish the stadtholdership. De Witt, from his jealousy of the Orange party, too much neglected the army; in consequence of this *misconduct*, Holland was invaded, and himself not only *cashiered*, but barbarously massacred. William III. was made stadtholder, with powers exceeding those of his ancestors; he restored

discipline to the troops, and gradually obliged Lewis to relinquish his conquests. Spain, and the empire, saw the approaching danger, and declared war against France. Charles II. finding his Parliament slow in granting supplies, quitted the war with as little honor as he had commenced it. Lewis, disappointed of conquering Holland first, and Flanders afterwards, resumed his original plan of making new acquisitions in Flanders, and of preventing England from holding the balance by a series of complicated intrigues.

A most curious argument, drawn from this period of history, was last session used in opposition to the present ministry. It was insisted, that in endeavouring to restore the ancient French monarchy, they imitated the criminality of Charles and his ministers. It seems, at first sight, that it would have been very easy to have replied by an obvious parallel. The *cabal* of Charles II. intrigued with the house of Bourbon to throw Holland into the power of France—if Mr. Pitt has used any intrigue, it has been to keep Holland out of that power. The *cabal* seconded the house of Bourbon in their ambitious



bitious views of conquest—if Mr. Pitt endeavoured to restore those princes, it was in hopes, that, instructed by dreadful experience, they would confine their ambition to the limits of their own territories. Elizabeth assisted the house of Bourbon to acquire the crown of France, because Spain was at that moment the more formidable enemy ; and from the same reason it was lawful to assist the Bourbons at the present æra against the malicious and inveterate French republic.

But there was in the end of Charles the Second's reign, *another species of French intrigue*, an intrigue with members of Parliament, which the opposition thought fit to pass over in total silence. I know that I tread upon dangerous ground ; I remember the indignation which Sir J. Dalrymple's discoveries excited on their first appearance. However, of late years I believe no one has gone so far as to deny the authenticity of Barillon's Letters to Lewis the Fourteenth. If any desperate republican would still support such a paradox, the answer is obvious. The papers still exist at Paris, let him ap-  
 4 ply

ply to his republican friends, and see who is hardy enough to assert their falsification. Another opinion has been started by those who cannot bear the idea that so many English patriots, and especially Algernon Sydney, took money of France: that Barillon deceived his master, and under the pretence of corrupting others, detained the money for his own use. I will not enter into the *probability* of this supposition, but will frankly allow it to be *possible*, because politicians are not accustomed to give receipts under their own hands for a bribe. It is enough for my argument if we may depend upon Sydney's political opinions as described by Barillon, for he could have no interest to represent them falsely. This important dispatch of Barillon is dated September 30, 1680, and some of its most material paragraphs are (closely translated) as follows:

“ ————— There are some who have  
 “ applied themselves for some time, to  
 “ make me understand that it is an old er-  
 “ ror to believe that it is against the inte-  
 “ rest of France to suffer England to be  
 “ come

“ come a republic. They endeavour to  
 “ prove by good reasons and the example  
 “ of the past, that the re-union of Eng-  
 “ land under a protestant authorised as the  
 “ Prince of Orange would be, is much  
 “ less conformable to the true interest of  
 “ France than a republic, which would  
 “ be more occupied with trade than with  
 “ any other thing, and would believe as  
 “ Cromwell did, that it should gain ra-  
 “ ther at the expence of Spain than of  
 “ France; they add, that the interest of  
 “ England as a republic, and that of Hol-  
 “ land governed as it is, could not easily  
 “ agree, whereas the Prince of Orange  
 “ could re-unite in his person the power of  
 “ the States General and of England to-  
 “ gether \* \* \* \* \*  
 “ \* \* \* \* \*  
 “ Mr. Sydney is one of those who talks to  
 “ me with the most force and the most  
 “ openness on this matter.”

Let the whole original letter be impar-  
 tially studied, and it must be gathered from  
 it, that Sydney was a deadly foe to the  
 house of Nassau, a warmer friend to France

than to the protestant religion, and willing to sacrifice the independence of all Europe to the ambition of Lewis, so he could set up his idol of a republic in England. I have long thought it a great misfortune, that the illegal condemnation of Sydney inclined the whigs to rank him amongst their martyrs along with Russel, from whom his principles divided him far as the poles asunder. They might both be honest men in the abstract sense, for they might both follow the dictates of conscience; but Russel's principles in a better reign would have made him a most useful English citizen: Sydney's sentiments would have always rendered him a most dangerous citizen in any monarchy whatsoever. Let his republican imitators in the present age consider what discoveries some future Dalrymple may bring forth, and stop their licentious tongues on the subject of corrupt intrigue. This noxious vice will flourish in *other soils* besides that of courts.

Whether it was the insincerity of the court, or the intrigues of the House of

Commons, that chiefly caused the inaction of England ; it is at least certain that England did remain inactive, while France concluded a most advantageous treaty at Nimeguen in 1678, and continued, during a short interval of gloomy and disturbed peace, to prosecute the same views of conquest as during the war. The same policy which now leads the French to treat separately with every power, to *divide* that they may reign, induced them to grant favourable terms to that very nation whose insolence had been the ostensible reason for beginning the war. Every Dutch town then in the hands of Lewis was restored to Holland, but Spain was obliged to yield Valenciennes, Condé, Bouchain, Cambrai, St. Omer, Ypres, and the whole county of Burgundy, commonly known by the name of Franche-comté. Soon after the peace of Nimeguen, the Turks attacked the Emperor Leopold with their wonted impetuosity, besieged Vienna itself, and were only defeated by the heroic valour of Sobieski, King of Poland. Such was the hatred entertained against Lewis, that it was generally believed his intrigues had al-



lured the Turks into this desperate war, in the romantic hope that after the total destruction of the house of Austria, the German princes for their *own preservation*, would elect him for their chief, and thus the empire of Charlemagne would be once more realised.

These suspicions are not authenticated by satisfactory proof; but it is certain, however, that Lewis profited by the alarms which this war occasioned, to attack various towns on the side of Flanders, on frivolous interpretations which he gave to the treaty of Nimeguen. Spain, unable to bear such repeated insults, took up arms unassisted by any other power, and only aggravated its misfortunes by losing Courtrai and the strong fortress of Luxembourg.

But by this time the empire was delivered from its imminent danger, by the total rout of the Turks, and Lewis began to consider, that he might lose all by seeking to gain all prematurely. A treaty was concluded at Ratisbon in 1684, under the singular title of a truce for twenty years, which implied  
a frank

a frank confession, that the causes of hatred were so strong that no durable peace could be expected in the present state of things. Three causes had contributed to unite all the German princes and cities in those resentments which might have otherwise been confined to the two branches of the house of Austria; first, the pretensions which Lewis formed in the name of his brother's wife to part of the succession of the deceased Elector Palatine; secondly, his seizure of Strasbourgh, which the Germans had refused to surrender when they were obliged by the treaty of Westphalia to surrender the rest of Alsace. The conquest of this town was facilitated by the disputes between two factions amongst the burgomasters, which are detailed in Barnes's letter. The details are in themselves of small moment, but yet an observant reader might select important instruction for the present age, and learn the fatal effects of party quarrels in great states as well as small. The third and principal cause which mortified the pride of the German princes, were the Chambers of Re-union set up at Metz and Brisac to inquire into

the titles by which the neighbouring princes held their lands; sovereigns were called before these tribunals, and obliged to own themselves vassals of France, or to forfeit their territories. This circumstance will appear of some importance when we relate events of a much later period.

In 1689, Charles the Second of England ended his life and reign amidst the turbulence and mutual contentions of faction. James the Second succeeded, obnoxious to many of his subjects on account of his religion, and therefore he most imprudently conceived that the protection of a foreign prince could shelter him from the resentment of such a great and populous community as England. A real and lasting league was supposed to be formed between James and Lewis, founded on similarity of principles and religion, whereas the friendship of Charles was light, and variable as his temper, always falling or rising as his exchequer was full or empty, and always at the service of the highest bidder. The addition of England to the scale of France increased the alarms of the rest of Europe,

Europe, and occasioned the famous league of Augsbourg in 1687, which, like the treaty of Pilnitz in the present age, was considered by France as an offensive, and by other powers as a defensive league. D'Avaux, a most able negotiator, had been employed by Lewis to detach the Dutch from the house of Austria, by keeping them in a perpetual ferment against their Stadtholder, but the revocation of the edict of Nantz, and the terrible accounts of Lewis's cruelty, disseminated every where by the persecuted Huguenots, (the French emigrants of the last age) had an effect on the Dutch which all the intrigues of D'Avaux could not counterbalance, they considered Lewis as a sworn enemy to their religion, and not only entered heartily into the league of Augsbourg, but also concurred in the scheme of setting their Stadtholder on the throne of England.

It is not necessary to inform an Englishman that the Revolution took place in 1688, that James ran away to France, and that William was proclaimed king of England, in 1689; but there is a light in which an



Englishman has not been always used to consider this famous revolution, and which it is necessary to enlarge upon. It could hardly have taken place if the mere power of English factions had been employed :—no ! it was aided\* by a coalition of the great continental powers as real, though more silent than that coalition of princes which it is the fashion of republicans to hold up at present in so odious a light. The same motive, though under different shapes, made Austria, Spain, &c. join in successfully undermining despotic power in England, and unsuccessfully attempting to overturn republicanism in France, namely, a regard to their own political interest. If James had united with France, they thought nothing could have prevented Lewis from obtaining universal monarchy, and the same panic subsisted at the present time with regard to the establishment of an universal republic, of which France was to be the center. The question of despotism

\* See Bishop Burnett's History, who goes as far as even to prove, that the revolution would have hardly succeeded if the Pope himself, provoked beyond bearing at Lewis's insolence, had not taken part against popery.



or liberty was but a secondary point ; the house of Austria would as willingly at that time have assisted in a *glorious revolution* in France as in England, but the French nation had not discovered the smallest discontent against their sovereign ; there is the greatest reason to believe that even retired, independent individuals were as eager for national conquests as Lewis or Louvois himself.

The King of France had before the revolution of England attacked the German empire by the siege and conquest of one of its bulwarks, Philipsbourg. William the Third did not fail to fulfill the tacit condition under which the co-operation of all Europe had assisted, in raising him to the throne ; and, indeed, the protection which Lewis was obliged in gratitude to bestow on James rendered a declaration of war indispensable.\*

England, Spain, Holland, Germany, carried on for many years an unremitting

\* See Madame de Sevigne's Letters, particularly those of the year 1672.

contest against France, and the disadvantage of a disunited league against one compact body was demonstrated in that war, though not in so terrible a manner as in the present. Sometimes the allies, but oftener Lewis, had the advantage in the field, till at last the taking of Namur, by King William was considered as decisive against the interest of France. The distresses of his kingdom began to affect Lewis, and the French, when they felt the scarcity of money, (and never till that moment) began to think that their sovereign was too ambitious. But the expectation that the sickly, infirm Charles the Second of Spain, would die without posterity, and leave his whole succession to the disposal of France, chiefly induced him to purchase a temporary interval of peace by conditions which a little straightened the limits of France. Luxembourg, Charleroi, Mons, Courtrai, Fribourg, and whatever had been seized by the invidious Chambers of Rion were restored to Spain or to Germany by the peace of Ryfwic in 1697. The duchy of Lorrain had long been one of the secondary objects of French ambition,

it had been seized by Richelieu, restored and seized again, but was now restored under more favourable auspices to the young Duke Leopold, nephew on the mother's side to the emperor.

It now became the object of all the powers of Europe to provide for the vacant succession of Spain, and adjust the jarring pretensions of Lewis the Fourteenth's descendants, sprung from that elder sister who had renounced her right by solemn oaths, and of the Imperial branch of the house of Austria descended from the younger sister of the Queen of France. Lewis seemed disposed to wave the extent of his claims for the sake of peace ; two different treaties of partition were at different times signed between England, Holland, and France. By the last and definitive treaty, Naples and Sicily were to be annexed to the crown of France, and the rest of the Spanish monarchy was to descend to the Archduke Charles, second son of the Emperor Leopold.

The

The emperor would never subscribe to this partition treaty, and the national pride of the Spaniards took fire at such an invasion of their independence. Charles the Second of Spain was persuaded by the intrigues of Cardinal Portocarrero to leave his whole dominions to the Duke of Anjou, second son to the dauphin, as the surest means to prevent the dismemberment of the Spanish monarchy. Charles died in November 1700; the councils of Versailles balanced for some moments between the will and partition treaty, but the latter prevailed, and the Duke of Anjou was declared King of Spain amidst the universal applause of the French nation as well as the French court. It was then that Lewis uttered that famous saying. “ *Il n’y a plus de Pyrénées,*” — the Pyrenees are no more—in the true style of pompous French eloquence, a style equally familiar to their republican generals and their despotic kings. Unhappily for England the meaning of that saying has been verified, and there is reason to fear that it will be verified still, even though the house of Bourbon is destroyed.

This

This unexpected union between two rival nations alarmed the rest of Europe with an idea of the immediate destruction of the balance of power, and with the apprehension of a further progress on the part of France towards her great aim of universal empire. Fresh leagues and alliances were entered into, and negotiations were begun rather for the purpose of gaining time to prepare for war, than with hopes of consolidating a durable peace.

It may be the system of modern philosophers to mark with reprobation the ensuing war, (distinguished as the *War of the Spanish Succession*) but Lord Bolingbroke, the mortal enemy of the whigs, the framer of the treaty of Utrecht, allows it to have been unavoidable.\* “ The immediate securing of commerce and of barriers, the preventing an union of the two monarchies in some future time, and the preservation of a certain degree at least of equality in the scales of power, were points too important to England, Hol-

\* Letters on the Study of History, vol. ii. p. 39.

“ land,



“ land, and the rest of Europe, to be  
 “ rested on the moderation of French  
 “ councils.”

Lewis at that time wounded the pride of the English nation by unnecessarily acknowledging the Pretender as King of England : and he alarmed the Dutch by an action not strictly just in itself, but more defensible in point of policy.

The general alarm occasioned in Holland by the French invasion of 1672, had made that country perceive the necessity of a strict alliance with its ancient enemy Spain. A treaty was entered into called the Barrier Treaty, by which a certain number of towns in Flanders were to receive Dutch garrisons, and the Dutch were thereby bound to defend them if attacked. These Dutch troops were neighbours too perilous either for Philip or Lewis ; they were surprised in one night, disarmed, and sent home. Bolingbroke (whom I had rather quote on such occasions than a more determined enemy to France) says, that “ the  
 “ impresson it made was much the same  
 “ as

“ as those of the surprises and seifures of  
 “ France in former usurpations. Every  
 “ one saw that there remained no longer  
 “ any barrier between France and the Seven  
 “ Provinces.” — These are precisely the  
 words that a modern English statesman  
 might have used in 1792.

It is remarkable that whilst Lewis softened this arbitrary measure, by immediately sending back the troops to their native country, his subjects were angry that he had not detained them prisoners against the law of nations. St. Simon has expressed himself strongly on this head, and President Henault considers Lewis's behaviour as generous rather than prudent. This may be placed amongst the many instances which shew that a nation may have less sense of justice than a king.

William the Third died in March, 1702, just as he was going to put himself at the head of another grand alliance, but his death made no alteration in the conduct of the allies. The Dutch silently resumed their republican form of government; but  
 William's

William's friends and partisans filled the chief offices for many years. Queen Anne entered into the war with more spirit than was expected, and thanks to those immortal names of Marlborough and Eugene, names which we may vainly wish to see equalled, the pride of Lewis and of France received the severest shocks. The battle of Blenheim saved the empire, the battle of Ramilies gave Flanders to the house of Austria ; the distresses of France augmented every year, and in 1710, Lewis would willingly have yielded to very humiliating terms. The obstinacy of the Dutch and the English whigs broke off the conferences at Gertruydenberg,—we now think them most evidently wrong ; but had we lived in those days, and shared their long-rooted distrust of Lewis, we should perhaps have been influenced by the same passions. The minds of the English soon cooled, the jealousy between churchmen and dissenters, and the dislike of Queen Anne against her tyrannical favourite, the Dukes of Marlborough, produced a change of councils. Oxford and Bolingbroke were raised to the ministry, in the year 1712 ; they signed a truce with

with France on the condition that Dunkirk should be garrisoned by English troops, called off the English from the allied army, and soon after the treaty of Utrecht was concluded, Eugene was defeated by Villars, and the emperor obliged in 1713, to sign a peace at Baden, not very advantageous for himself or the empire.

The famous treaty of Utrecht was for a long while the standing theme of Whig invective; and it is a circumstance worthy the attention of the modern reader, that Bolingbroke in his fore-cited work owns it was not so good a treaty as he wished to have made:\* but he throws all the blame on the Whigs, who by *clandestinely intriguing* with foreign courts, and spiriting up Holland and Austria to refuse the queen's mediation, laid her under the necessity of making a separate peace. Some of Lord Bolingbroke's reflections are so applicable to the present time, that they should be given in his own words. "The low and exhausted  
"state to which France was reduced, was

\* See vol. ii. pages 119, 122, 123.

“ but a momentary reduction of her power,  
 “ and whatever real and more lasting re-  
 “ duction the treaty of Utrecht brought  
 “ about in some instances, it was not suffi-  
 “ cient. The power of France would not  
 “ have appeared as great as it did when  
 “ England and Holland armed themselves,  
 “ and armed all Germany against her, if  
 “ she had lain as open to the invasions of  
 “ her enemies, as her enemies lay to her’s.  
 “ Her inward strength was great, but the  
 “ strength of those frontiers which Lewis  
 “ the Fourteenth was almost forty years in  
 “ forming, and which the folly of all his  
 “ neighbours in their turns suffered him to  
 “ form, made this strength formidable.  
 “ The true reduction of the exorbitant  
 “ power of France, (*I take no notice of*  
 “ *chimerical projects about changing her*  
 “ *government,*) consisted therefore in dis-  
 “ arming her frontiers, and fortifying the  
 “ barriers against her by the cession and  
 “ demolition of many more places than  
 “ she yielded up at Utrecht; but not of  
 “ more than she might have been obliged  
 “ to sacrifice to her own immediate relief,  
 “ and



“ and to the future security of her neighbours.”

We see that Bolingbroke considered the want of greater security to Flanders and Germany as a solid objection to the peace of Utrecht. Yet Flanders itself was taken from the house of Bourbon, and given to Austria as a safer neighbour to England; yet several of Lewis's conquered towns were given back to Flanders, and Dutch garrisons were admitted into several more under the well-known name of the Dutch Barrier. But it was a great error not to insist that Lille, the almost impregnable fortress, Lille, whose conquest was the noblest of Marlborough's achievements, that Lille (at all events) should be added to the portion of the house of Austria. The destiny of the present war has in some measure turned on that fatal hinge.

It was also a misfortune to Germany that Landau remained in the hands of France. But the Germanic body had impracticable pretensions, they wished to retake Strasbourg and the whole of Alsace,

and were forced at last to remain with very slender satisfaction.

The great and material objection to the treaty of Utrecht, the resigning Spain into the hands of a prince of the house of Bourbon, was not felt at that time so strongly as we have felt it since; for most theoretical politicians, and Lord Bolingbroke amongst the rest, insisted that the Kings of Spain would soon become Spaniards and forget their French extraction. Unhappily that metamorphosis has not yet taken place, and the most popular article of the treaty of Utrecht has, in great measure, prevented it—the cession of Gibraltar to England. There is great reason to believe that more than once the ministry would have resigned Gibraltar to purchase Spanish friendship, and the rising resentment of the *sovereign people* has broke off all negotiation. An additional hint to those who, like Dr. Price, attribute all causes of war to “*the passions of kings and ministers.*”

We are now arrived to the close of Lewis the Fourteenth's reign, and on reviewing it

it accurately we shall find, that notwithstanding the few retrograde steps which the power of France was compelled to make at Ryfwic and at Utrecht, these were in no proportion to the progressive strides it had taken from the accession of Lewis in 1640. Roussillon, Alsace, Franchcomté, Artois, the towns of Lille, Valenciennes, Condé, and many other important fortresses, these were the capital acquisitions which remained after all the victories of Marlborough and Eugene. The ill successes attending on Lewis's declining years had made him, however, in his old age, unpopular amongst his subjects, who, mortified by disappointments, began to assume a kind of philosophical cant against ambition and conquest, which experience has shewn to have dwelt on their lips not in their hearts. He himself with his latest breath declared his penitence for his too frequent wars;—a declaration which may be insincere from a king,—but I never yet heard of a republican hero, who paid even this poor tribute to humanity. By the premature deaths of the son, two grandsons, and one great-grandson of Lewis XIV. in the course of two years, his family was

reduced to one sickly infant, afterwards Lewis XV. and to the King of Spain, who with all his descendants had been excluded from the crown of France by the treaty of Utrecht, whilst the right of eventual succession was given to Philip Duke of Orleans, the old king's nephew. It was not one of the least mortifications of his unfortunate old age, that he knew the regency must devolve on the Duke of Orleans, whom he considered as the secret enemy of his family, and to whom he ever behaved with as much jealousy, as if some unknown secret forebodings had revealed to him the crimes and misfortunes that the branch of Orleans were doomed to commit or to occasion.

Philip, however, though a most profligate character, had not the cruel cowardly ambition of his last descendant; he did not seek to destroy the poor orphan prince left at his mercy, but he was ever ready to maintain his right of succession, and for that purpose was obliged by policy to keep on good terms with England, and the house of Brunswick, who had guaranteed that right,  
and



and to discourage all the attempts of the descendants of James II. against that new established family ; but it must be observed, that this policy was reprobated by the majority of the French nation, and by men who were no more friends than the English themselves to the excesses of arbitrary power. Two lately published works are proofs of this fact ; the *Memoirs of the Duc de St. Simon*, and the *Memoirs of Massillon on the Regency* (privately written for the instruction of Lewis XV. when he came of age) Massillon was the famous author of the sermons preached before Lewis when a child, under the name of *Le Petit Careme*, and it is hardly possible to draw a feverer, sterner picture of the duties and office of a king.

St. Simon appears by his memoirs to have been of a steady, inflexible spirit, sparing in his praise, liberal in his censure, a mortal enemy to Lewis XIV. and his ministry.\* Yet these men, whose characters

\* To describe his character in his own singular but expressive words. In the midst of the corrupted fawning



ters had something in them of an English turn, were no friends to England. How then have Englishmen been so deceived as to expect friendship from a Mirabeau, a Brissot, and a Condorcet? The fact is, that ever since the revolution when England interfered to check the universal empire of France, she has been the primary object of Frenchmen's hatred, even as much as the house of Austria itself.

It must not be dissembled, that there was no great good-will thrown away on the side of the English nation, I say the nation rather than the court, for whatever modern French writers may suppose, the court of England wished for twenty-five years together, to keep on terms of amity with France, and to settle the various disputes which arose in Europe by negociation rather than by arms; but this negotiating turn was made the theme of patriotic contempt and invective, and there is not a question and answer History of England for

ing courtiers of the regent, he made it his boast, "that  
 " with regard to flattery and meanness, he had pre-  
 " served himself in a state of virgin innocence."

children,

children, which does not tell its readers, that, \* “ Sir Robert Walpole’s pacific temper was attributed to pusillanimity, or to “ a secret correspondence with France.”

The temper of the young king was early known to be weak, but he was long thought to be chaste, temperate, and pacific. The dying admonitions of Lewis XIV. against war and prodigality were written in letters of gold, hung over his bed’s head, and were supposed to have had a powerful influence on his mind ; had he been left to himself his kingdom might have been happy, but his restless countrymen could not bear their own tranquillity. Villars tells us in his memoirs, that he used to take opportunities to repeat in the council, that although it was a king’s duty not to burden his subjects, it was also his duty to maintain the national honour, and keep faith with his allies ; at last, in 1734, an occasion occurred to persuade him that the national honour was affected, Lewis XV. had

\* Sir R. W. was particularly blamed for suffering France to acquire Lorraine.

married the daughter of Stanislaus, the dis-  
 possessed King of Poland; on the death of  
 Augustus I. Elector of Saxony; one party  
 of the Polish nobility elected his son  
 Augustus II. another party re-elected Stanis-  
 laus, and Lewis took up arms to support  
 the interest of his father-in-law, whilst the  
 court of Vienna assisted the election of  
 Augustus; but it soon appeared that Stanis-  
 laus and Augustus were nominal rather  
 than real causes of the war, and that the  
 aim of the French was to deprive the house  
 of Austria of some of the advantages it  
 had gained by the treaty of Utrecht. Flan-  
 ders was not attacked indeed, the remem-  
 brance of Ramillies, of Oudenarde, of Mal-  
 pliquet, still haunted French imaginations,  
 (though England had not now a Marl-  
 borough to fight its battles) but Naples  
 and Sicily were conquered and given to  
 Don Carlos, second son to Philip King of  
 Spain, and the French arms penetrated into  
 Lombardy with the same success as in the  
 present year, and the emperor was glad to  
 purchase peace by a sacrifice of more benefit  
 to France than detriment to himself. His  
 eldest daughter and heiress was intended  
 both

both by her own and her parents' inclination to espouse Francis, the young Duke of Lorraine, the head of a family so long persecuted by France. It was agreed that when this great alliance was concluded, Francis in return should yield Lorraine to be enjoyed by Stanislaus during his life, and after his death irrevocably united to Francis by way of compensation, had the great duchy of Tuscany, and France guaranteed the universal succession of Austria to Maria Teresa; she wedded the young Duke Francis, in 1739, and thus, to use the expression of a French Author,\* the house of Lorraine found an asylum on the Imperial throne. But future events have shewn that it is but a weak asylum against the pertinacious hatred of France. Three years before, another marriage took place in England, whose consequences are also felt at the present moment. Anne, Princess Royal of England, was married to William, head of the second or younger branch of Orange, descended in the male line from an uncle of the famous William I. and in

\* *A trouvée pour asyl le trone imperial*, were the original words.



the female from the wise and moderate Frederic Henry. All who yet remember the court of George the Second, will readily vouch that neither George nor his Queen greatly approved of the marriage. It was pressed on by the Whig party, applauded by low-churchmen and dissenters,—who little thought their descendants would one day take part with France against the house of Nassau. There were, indeed, some men who even then predicted that the marriage was imprudent, and by raising jealousies in the republican party it would throw them into the interests of France. But the tide of popularity carried all before it; these predictions met with the same fate as those of Cassandra, and their authors were almost stigmatized with the name of Tories.

From 1737 to 1740, the French remained tranquil, but the unexpected death of Charles the Sixth once more threw Europe into confusion, and gave France an opportunity to display her perfidious character.

The



The male line of the powerful house of Austria was extinct in the Emperor Charles, and several princes were ready at the moment of his dissolution, to assert various, nay, contradictory claims, on his daughter's patrimony. He had hoped to provide against the danger, by engaging England, France, in short, all the most powerful European states, to guarantee Maria Teresa's universal succession (under the name of the Pragmatic sanction.) But no sooner was he deceased, than the uncertainty of all such guarantees evidently appeared. The King of Prussia, the admirable, but by no means amiable Frederic, first took up arms, to assert some obsolete claims to Silesia; the Elector of Bavaria followed, with one sweeping general claim to the whole succession of Austria, and could allow Maria Teresa no other title than consort to the Great Duke of Tuscany.—Still the balance was equally suspended, but France broke its plighted word, and Austria seemed reduced to the lowest ebb of despair.—Villars and Berwick had perished in the last war; Cardinal Fleury, worn down by age and infirmities, stood

töttering on the brink of the grave; two brothers, the Marshal and the Count de Belleisle, men of brilliant parts and unbounded ambition, presided over the councils of France; they persuaded the simple yielding monarch, and hurried the scrupulous, reluctant cardinal into a war founded on injustice and perjury. The military men were glad of an opportunity to gain reputation, and the nation refounded in 1740 (as well as in 1792) with the crimes of Austria, its enmity to France, and the necessity of disarming it for ever of its mischievous power.

The consequences of these *unlawful*, but not *unpopular* measures, are well known; the long and general war that followed, the early successes of the Elector of Bavaria, the firmness of the Queen of Hungary, the loyalty of her subjects, and the final repulse of the French and Bavarians from Bohemia in 1742. But the part that England took in these transactions must be explained more at large.—George the Second was displeased with the  
Queen

Queen of Hungary, for rejecting his advice to yield Silesia to the King of Prussia; he was discouraged at the reluctance of the States General to enter into war, and alarmed for the safety of his German dominions. Sir R. Walpole, on his side, thought he had enough on his hands, having been forced by the opposition into a war with Spain which he foresaw would prove his ruin. No effectual assistance was therefore sent to the Queen of Hungary during 1741, the year of her greatest distress, and George gave his vote as Elector of Hanover, to raise her enemy the Elector of Bavaria to the Imperial throne. On this, an universal spirit was diffused through the people in favour of an oppressed and deserted orphan, and Mr. Burke's favourite *Age of Chivalry* seemed to be realized. Pamphlets were published to celebrate her virtues, her beauty, and her constancy under misfortunes; and the old Dowager Duchess of Marlborough proposed that the ladies of England should defend the cause of their sex, and collect a subsidy to assist a woman deserted by those  
 who

who had sworn her protection.\* Let those men who now think it frantic and unpardonable to enter into war to save the houses of Nassau and Austria, ask their own consciences, whether if they had been malcontents in 1741, they would not, on the contrary, have supported the fore-mentioned doctrine of Villars, that it is not the only duty of a king to abstain from imposing taxes, but that he must also support the national honour.

By the end of 1743, matters were greatly changed, Sir R. Walpole was removed from the seat of power, new ministers were in office, new measures were adopted, and a continental war was fully entered upon. The language of opposition was also diametrically changed, a new doctrine was broached, that England should never engage in continental wars, which the ministry rejected, as contrary to all the maxims

\* Voltaire, with his usual inaccurate vivacity, has turned this loose talk of *Old Sarah* into a serious transaction, but it was little more than a *squib* of the day, tossed abroad to startle the court.

of



of whiggism introduced by King William. But the violence of opposition chiefly fell on the measure of taking Hanoverian troops into British pay, and they succeeded so well in raising a universal clamour against Hanover, that the French and the Jacobites were fatally persuaded a majority of the nation desired a change of government.

From this time, the course of events bore some resemblance to the present momentous period. Cardinal Tencin, the Belle-Isles, and Marechal Saxe, resumed those projects which have never been separated—to conquer Flanders and to change the government of England. The Pretender was invited, an army was assembled, and transports prepared at Dunkirk and Calais; war was formally declared against England and the Queen of Hungary, Lewis the XVth, at the head of his army, entered Flanders in May 1744, and from that date the war which had hitherto been disadvantageous to France, was carried on with that success which has ever attended the French arms in Flanders, excepting

G

that



that memorable period when Marlborough and Eugene commanded the united armies, and were *truly united* in their councils.

Very different was the case in the war we are treating of, as well as in the present. The Dutch came unwillingly into the field, the Austrians, who had defended themselves heroically when the war was at their own doors, fought languidly and unsuccessfully in Flanders. They seemed ready to say to the English—It is more your interest than our's to keep Flanders separate from France, it is therefore but just that your blood and your money should support the contest.

Lewis the XVth had for some time addicted himself to a course of life very different from the habits of his early years, and his favourite mistress, the Duchesse de Chateau Roux, is said to have animated him to war and conquest, thinking that a woman derived honour from the heroism of her lover. He was not deficient in personal courage, and shewed it at the famous battle of Fontenoy, fought on May the 1st,

1745, which opened to him the gates of Flanders, as the battle of Jemappe opened them to Dumourier: but as the principal towns were at that time well fortified, the Austrian Netherlands then took three years in conquering, whereas, now they can be over-run in as many weeks. A remarkable saying is recorded of Lewis the XVth, as he surveyed the tomb of Mary of Burgundy and the Emperor:—  
 “ Behold the cradle of our wars ! ” —  
 Lewis was no very learned historian, or subtle reasoner; but he and every Frenchman knew, by a sort of intuition, that the disappointment of not having stretched their empire to the northern sea, on the death of Charles the Bold, had contributed to keep up that restless, warlike, conquering spirit, in the whole nation, which induced their kings to set the dangerous precedent of vast perpetual military establishments.

Both their kings and the nation well knew that it would be difficult to extend their dominion so far, till they could settle a government in England entirely at their

devotion. James II. would have been the willing tool of their projects, and they flattered themselves with the same subserviency from his grandson. Their schemes of invasion had been disappointed by the winds in 1744, but in July 1745 they succeeded in sending the unfortunate Charles Stuart to Scotland, very poorly supplied with arms or with money. His cause was sacrificed in Scotland after the same manner as that of James II. had been sacrificed in Ireland, both were neglected and suffered to be crushed by the English but the French succeeded in one great view, as a considerable part of the British troops were recalled from the continent, and fewer obstacles remained towards the conquest of the Netherlands. The Queen of Hungary, having by this time raised her husband to the Imperial throne, seemed more and more indifferent as to her remote dominions, the triumphs of France continued through the whole year 1746, and in the spring of 1747 their troops were actually on the frontiers of Dutch Flanders; the court of France was now as unable to resist the temptation of attacking the United Provinces

vinces as Louis XIV. in 1672. The Dutch had only acted as auxiliaries in the war, sending such troops as were stipulated by former treaties; the French ambassador's intrigues had greatly contributed to this pacific temper; but now the French forced them to become principals, by seizing Sluys and Hulst, publishing at the same time a declaration, pretending they were only seized from state-necessity, and would be restored at the peace. A ferment spread through Holland at the news, which almost equalled the ferment occasioned by the invasion of Louis XIV. and produced a great political revolution. The Dutch once more thought their governors guilty of misconduct, and once more therefore exercised the right of *cashiering* them. The common people rose in all their towns, and forced their magistrates to declare the Prince of Orange stadtholder. It must be mentioned in compliment to the present house of Orange, that not one of their opponents perished on this occasion; but if the elevation of William IV. was not stained with murder like that of William III. it unhappily was not dignified by his glorious



exploits and by his success. The surprize of Bergen-op-zoom by the French General Lovendahl, in the autumn of that year, was an irreparable loss to the cause of the allies, and a disgrace to the new Dutch government, for it gave rise to suspicions (though unjust ones) of their treachery, even as the old magistrates had been suspected of corruption in the first invasion, and it certainly proved that they had not been able to inspire their troops with more vigour than the *cashiered* race of dull, droning burgomasters.

During all the winter of 1747, a peace was in agitation, and a congress was assembled at Aix-la-Chapelle. In 1748, Saxe and Lovendahl, with their wonted military skill, attacked Maestricht, and it surrendered by capitulation about the very time that preliminaries of peace were signed at Aix-la-Chapelle. It may well surprise us, who are witnesses of the exorbitant terms demanded by a republic to recollect the moderate terms of a despotic sovereign.

All



All his conquests in Flanders and Holland were restored, on condition that England should restore the settlements it had taken (which chiefly consisted in the island of Cape Breton) and that Austria should acknowledge Don Philip, youngest son of the King of Spain, as Duke of Parma. Various reasons were assigned for this generosity. The first, was the alarm occasioned by an army of Russians, hired by an English subsidy, and then on their march through Germany; another and more honourable, was the general distress occasioned in France by the superiority of our marine, the losses of their merchants, and the misery of the common people arising from deficient harvests. The retailers of court scandal added, that Madame de Pompadour, the reigning favourite of a very different temper from the Duchesse de Chateau Roux, was sick of the war, because she was afraid of being made a victim to appease the clamours of the nation, whilst her enemies scrupled not to say, that she had accepted bribes from the allies.

Whatever be the cause, it is certain that the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle may be rec-

ked as one of the instances in which an absolute king has allowed himself to be more influenced by the discontent arising from general misery, than an assembly or a senate has done. The subjects of Louis shewed very little gratitude in return for his moderation. Though their poets commended his generosity at the time, yet his popularity sunk with the bulk of the nation, and never recovered itself. Doubtless his vices and follies contributed to produce that effect: but I must think that his having relinquished that darling national object, the conquest of Flanders, had some share in making him despised.

The peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was not at first very popular in England. But the rebellion of 1745 had greatly weakened the rancour of opposition, who were at last convinced, that *violent invectives against government prove invitations to a common foe to invade the country, and to ruin both parties.* The people, being left to themselves, soon grew convinced that the peace was nearly as good as could have been obtained. Its worst fault was, leaving some important points unsettled between England and France

France. The disputes about the North American limits occasioned the war of 1755, and the jealousies between the French and English East India companies opened a new source of national hatred, which continues to the present day.

Between 1730 and 1750, the Mogul empire had been shattered to pieces from causes in which neither French nor English ambition was concerned, but a Frenchman, the famous M. Dupleix, was the first who conceived the idea of raising a European empire in Hindostan. His views were all directed to the aggrandizement of France, and the destruction of the English East India Company, who were compelled in self-defence to adopt similar plans of ambition and political intrigue. Dupleix was disgraced, his successors wanted either parts or judgment, the French views of empire were blasted, and those of England succeeded to a degree that has astonished the world. But hence has arisen the bitterest jealousy and revenge in French bosoms, which has vented itself in the grossest exaggeration of those offences which it cannot be denied that Englishmen have some-

sometimes committed in Hindostan, but which have sprung rather from pressing temptation or apparent necessity, than from cool malignity, or deliberate depravity of heart.

Another consequence followed (nearer home) from the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle which has been severely felt in the present times. The French gave back the fortified towns of Flanders in a dismantled state; the Dutch were by treaty engaged to join in repairing their own barrier, but neither they nor the empress queen chose to spend their money. Delay and recrimination took place, the fortifications grew daily more out of repair, and the importance of the Barrier treaty dwindled into nothing.

The Dutch were, at that moment, in a situation unfavourable for exertion, and ill-suited to a republican government,—their chief magistrate was a minor. William IV. Prince of Orange, died suddenly in 1751, and his death proved a great loss both to England and to Holland; for though he was not equal to his predecessors, yet he  
had



had abilities sufficient to have prevented many of the misfortunes which have since befallen his country. His son (hereditary stadtholder by the late regulation) was an infant of three years old, the princess his mother was appointed governess, but did not long survive.

Duke Lewis of Brunswic was invited from Germany to superintend the young prince's education, and to hold his place as captain-general; the English ambassador naturally thought that he also had a right to enter into the councils of a prince, whose dying mother had recommended him to the care of England, and whom the English considered as a prince of their own blood royal. But hence arose endless jealousies amongst those of his own party, whilst many Dutchmen became attached to the anti-stadtholderian faction, because they disliked the influence of England, of the house of Brunswic, or lastly, of Prussia, after their stadtholder had married a princess of that family; whilst the French silently cherished all the sparks of discontent by means of their ambassadors.

It



It is a great question in politics, whether alliance by marriage with superiors, or even equals, is not of more detriment than utility to a prince, from the jealousy it gives his own countrymen of foreign influence. We shall contemplate a terrible example of those dangers, when we retrace the history of the alliance between Austria and France.

After the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, the court of France was more disposed to friendship with the court of Vienna than for ages preceding. Some have thought that Lewis XV. really felt remorse for the unjust attack he had made upon Maria Terefa, in defiance of the faith of treaties; others (as before hinted) have said that Madame Pompadour was bribed by Austrian gold; the English writers almost all agree that France had now chosen England for her primary object of vengeance, and determined to ruin its colonies, commerce, and marine, before it again ventured on continental acquisitions. The French give much the same account of our ambition, and each nation represents the other as determined to expel its rival from America.

It

It is no part of my intention to examine the justice or injustice of the war of 1755; if it were as unjust as the French chuse to suppose it, the sin lies chiefly at the door of those American states, now the allies of France, and of those merchants who traded with our American colonies, the court, in this as well as in the preceding Spanish war, only followed the temper of the nation, which sincerely believed the French to be actuated by the most malignant views.

Before France embarked in this new kind of colonial and naval war, it saw a necessity for altering its plan of measures upon the continent.

The empress queen preserved the most unrelenting hatred towards the King of Prussia, and never could be easy whilst he remained in quiet possession of Silesia. It was not the interest of George II. as king of England, much less as elector of Hanover, to join with her against Prussia, all his former services were consequently forgot, and Maria Teresa was ready for an union  
with

with her former enemy, if he gratified her in her present darling scheme of vengeance. Actuated by these motives, the French king and the empress signed, in 1756, that famous treaty of alliance which at the time astonished all Europe, which was boasted of as the master-piece of human policy, as the *palladium* of both families, Bourbon and Austria; and which from its remote consequences, may be said to have destroyed one family, and nearly ruined the other. I must refer the curious (as the subject of itself would fill a volume) to the Mémoires of Duclos, in which may be found the particular history of this important treaty, whose real popularity scarce lasted a twelvemonth. The ill-successes of that war fixed an odium upon the alliance with Austria, which was suppressed by the credit of Choiseul, and the power of an absolute government; but silently fermented in the hearts of Frenchmen, and has had a greater share in producing the French revolution than common observers will easily believe.

It is not surprising that this treaty was detested in England, because we had reason to accuse Maria Teresa of ingratitude. But if its consequences are examined with an impartial eye, it will appear neither England nor France had much reason to complain. England was relieved from the burden of defending Austria in its most vulnerable part, whilst the weakness of the Austrian power in Flanders would hinder it from engaging in actual hostilities with England, even when it no longer wished well to this country. France had gained that security on its frontiers, that peace and tranquillity for the peasant and the artisan, which its philosophers pretended to be the summit of their wishes. But it lost an opportunity of conquest, and conquest rather than security was the true national wish.

It cannot however be an object of surprise, if a war so unsuccessful as that of 1756, should have left a lasting odium on the ministers, the councils, and the allies of that period. The glorious exploits of the English nation are too well known to require



require any details:—the French, unable singly to resist our force, persuaded the new king of Spain, Charles III. to unite with their court in the famous league called the *family-compact*, which at that time succeeded no better than the alliance with Austria, and yet never grew unpopular. The reason must be, that it did not impede them from continental acquisitions, and they perceived, that even in the midst of our triumphs, we felt some awe at the union of these two empires. Then indeed we felt after so long an interval, the unfortunate consequences of the treaty of Utrecht. The tide of English conquests was not however turned by this additional enemy, Spain lost the Havannah and Manilla, and both Spain and France were glad to sue for peace, and yield to England very considerable advantages by the treaty of Paris. In all human affairs, the most brilliant appearances of success often end in disappointment, and this melancholy truth was verified by the English. They did not think the colonies which they retained were adequate to the expences of the war, secret discontent against government rankled



led in many bosoms, whilst those acquisitions that England despised appeared so considerable to foreign nations as to kindle a jealousy which has never been extinguished.

The exhausted state of France required many years of repose, and the reign of Lewis XV. terminated without any fresh war (unless that name can be given to the conquest of Corsica.) But the internal tranquillity of France was disturbed by a hundred vexatious incidents, arising partly from the personal vices of the king, partly from the unsettled and indefinite claims of the *parlemens*, or great courts of justice, to a share in the legislative authority. There was yet another cause which operated more secretly, but with considerable effect. It was the rivalry between two considerable parties; one attached to the alliance with Austria, and headed by the Duc de Choiseul, the other headed by the Duc d'Aguillon, mortally adverse to Choiseul, and therefore (in the usual logic of factions) adverse to Austria. The officers of the army employed in Germany, had been

much dissatisfied at the superiority obtained by the King of Prussia and Prince Ferdinand; they attributed it to the strict discipline of the German troops, and endeavoured to introduce a similar strictness among their soldiery, though it was totally repugnant to the spirit of the French nation. Thus early were sown the seeds which produced that defection of the soldiery from their monarch and their officers, which has been one of the most astonishing circumstances of the revolution.

The reader may observe in a book of *Memoirs*,\* published under the name of the Aiguillon family, that one of the severest general imputations it lays upon the memory of Choiseul, is his implicit devotion to the court of Vienna. “Choiseul  
“had fulfilled his sole duty,—for Vienna  
“was content,” is one (for instance) of its malignant expressions. And yet if the reader considers the subject with attention, he will not find one solid substantial fact

\* *Memoires du Ministère du Duc d'Aiguillon*, troisième édition, 1792, p. 128.

to prove that the interests of France were sacrificed to that of Vienna—except that France did not enlarge its frontiers.

The necessity of keeping up an interest at the court of Versailles, for the preservation of Flanders, was well known at Vienna during the life of Maria Teresa, and to secure that interest, a marriage was planned and completed in 1770, between the young Dauphin of France and the Archduchess Maria Antonia. In all the long annals of human disappointment and error there is scarce an instance in which political wisdom was so completely disappointed. Here let compassion pause and breathe a sigh at the name of Maria Antonia, the most unfortunate woman history ever recorded. Doomed to ruin herself and all that was most dear to her; the family from whom she sprung; the family to which she was united; and the children whom she bore:—all victims of her errors!—and yet those errors were not so much her own as those of the nation by whom she was adopted, and who pretended at first to applaud those very frailties which it has since

punished, not with the coolness of impassive justice, but with the fury with which infernal fiends may be supposed to torment the damned. Mr. Burke has compared her first appearance at the court of Versailles, to the rising of the morning star. More truly might she now be likened, by poetic fancy, to that comet which some philosophers think is predestined to dash our feeble orb into fragments, whilst itself, unconscious of the devastation it occasions, only follows the course traced out for it by over-ruling causes.

Through all the cloud of incense offered by the hand of flattery, it may now be plainly seen that Maria Antonia was never really popular in France. The unfortunate accident that happened at Paris; where numbers were crushed to death at the festival on the celebration of the marriage, strangely and unjustly contributed to sour the minds of the Parisians against her. But when she first was received in France, the odium attached to the low vices of the king, and his disgraceful favourite Madame de Barré,



Barré, gave an appearance of popularity to every other branch of the royal family.

Lewis the Fifteenth died in 1774; his grandson, the virtuous and unfortunate Lewis the Sixteenth, succeeded, and for a time was popular; but many causes, and amongst others the influence of his young queen, soon contributed to cloud that auspicious dawn. She had been sent from Vienna, convinced that it was both her interest and her duty to support that party which supported the alliance between her own and her husband's family, and of course to favour the Duc de Choiseul. But there her interest failed—he never was recalled to court, for Lewis XVI. had conceived an insurmountable aversion to him. \*It has been said that the young king believed his father, the dauphin, to have been poisoned by Choiseul; and although the lingering consumptive death of that prince bears no resemblance to the effects of any known poison, yet Choiseul was the dauphin's open enemy; his case had been

\* Mem. du Min. du Duc d'Avig. page 200, and 168.

thought an extraordinary one by the physicians, and these, to the malignant imagination of the French, (ever prone to accuse their enemies of the blackest crimes) were grounds sufficient upon which to build the most dreadful accusations. Although the queen could not prevail in one favourite point, yet her influence kept the d'Aiguillon family in a state of disgrace—the particulars may be seen in the Memoirs already quoted. Here, then, was one powerful party already interested to blacken her character; and the dislike she soon expressed for the young Duc de Chartres, added another party still more dangerous, because supported by immense wealth, and headed by a prince of the blood. The greatest circumspection would have been necessary in such a situation, and unfortunately she had none. Her expences were profuse, her manners indiscreet, her friendships ill chosen; it was therefore no difficult matter for calumny to assume the garb of truth. Meanwhile the continual adulation bestowed on her by wits and poets, contributed to blind her eyes to the real opinion of the people. It will remain an everlasting disgrace on that  
body

body of Frenchmen particularly called *Hommes de Lettres*, that they first argued or sneered religion, continence, and decorum, out of fashion, then turned republicans, and persecuted the queen and royal family for real or supposed deficiencies in those qualities which themselves had first stigmatized as narrow bigotry.

In proportion as the queen grew unpopular, the unpopularity of the family she sprung from naturally increased, but it was not for a long while apparent to foreigners, because revenge upon England was the first and darling project of the French nation. The ill-judged scheme of taxing America, followed by the unfortunate American war, gave them the opportunity so long expected. The mild temper of the king would, perhaps, have passed it over, but the zeal of the merchants, who thought they should acquire all the trade of America, was too violent to be resisted. Another argument was invented to excuse the conduct of France. It was supposed, that as the best way to appease a civil war, it was intended whenever Great Britain made peace with

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America,

America, to turn our united force upon the French West Indies ; the supposition was probably entirely false, neither the king nor Lord North ever shewed any disposition to foreign conquests : but it is mentioned to show the French that they cannot be surprised if during their own revolution, intentions were attributed to them similar to what they attributed to England. This war afforded them a happy occasion to accomplish another of their darling views, to disunite Holland from England, and sow the seeds of ruin to the house of Nassau. The Duc de Vauguyon was sent ambassador to Holland, to animate the courage of the long-defeated republican party, and soon succeeded in rendering the Stadtholder unpopular.

It were too complicated and delicate a subject to enter into all the grounds of quarrel between that unfortunate prince and his enemies ; but the circumstance that hurt him most with the mercantile part of the nation, was his opposition to the American interest, and his desire to remain at peace with England. The Dutch may have a  
right



right to say that he sacrificed their honour to that inclination; but can those English republicans blame him, who in all their publications down to Mr. Waddington's advertisements, have taken it for granted that *we* ought to sacrifice all national honour to peace and tranquillity? Let their deluded adherents learn, that their doctrine of the sovereignty of the people would be very far from insuring peace, since a chief magistrate is even now wandering in exile, and *cashiered* by the people, for the misconduct of being too pacific.

As the Prince of Orange would by no means be persuaded into an alliance with America, the burgomasters of Amsterdam, who, like the French, expected to gain millions in this new-discovered *Potosi*, the American trade, concluded a clandestine treaty of commerce with that country, contrary to the established principles of the Dutch constitution. This treaty was intercepted in 1780; we complained; we found no redress but the usual Dutch answer, that the business was taken *ad referendum*,

*rendum* ; we made it the ostensible reason of that sudden declaration of war in December, 1780, which astonished all Europe, and called down much censure on those who framed it : but its real ground was not the treaty of commerce, but the armed neutrality proposed by Russia, founded on principles, which, whether they are or are not just in the abstract, have never been allowed by this country ; and the admission of which, especially of that particular one which allows free passage to naval stores, would probably ruin the popularity of any English minister who ventured on it. This armed neutrality was another scheme of France to embroil us with all the world, and it did succeed in embroiling us with Holland. Our ministers knew, that in the next assembly of the States General, their accession to the league would have been voted, and therefore Russia would have been bound to take up arms the first Dutch ship we seized ; it was judged expedient to chuse the least of two evils, to begin the war with Holland on a plausible ground, and leave Russia to be neuter if she pleased. It *did* please her to

be indifferent as to the fate of Holland, and even to grow indifferent as to her own project, and thus the armed neutrality did not do us the harm the French intended; even as the impolitic attack from Spain in 1778, did not enable the French either to invade England or to burn Plymouth. The Stadtholder was now left to carry on a war which he always disapproved, and of course was liable to the suspicion of carrying it on faintly and ineffectually. The time when that suspicion became most plausible, was when the French required a squadron to join their fleet at Brest, and the captains absolutely refused. I must observe, however, that as the French, now they hold Holland in chains, have not renewed any request for a fleet, it looks as if they were conscious it was a hard demand which the Dutch captains would never obey willingly.

During this unhappy war, another unexpected blow fell upon Holland: the Emperor Joseph (in 1781) seized that opportunity to disannul at once the whole Barrier treaty and send the Dutch garrisons home.

home. It was his theory that countries should be preserved by armies, not by fortifications; and fatal experience has shewn that all his refined philosophical theories were false. As he was thought neither to love nor esteem his sister, it may be thought strange he did not foresee that her unpopularity might bring on a war between France and Austria, and give him cause to wish for another Barrier treaty to ensure the assistance of Holland, and perhaps of England.

Soon after these events, all the belligerent powers grew tired of a war from which all had suffered in a nearly equal proportion, and France, which appeared the most successful, was afterwards discovered to have suffered the most. Neckar at the beginning of the war had directed the French finances, and the greatest encomiums had been paid (even by Mr. Burke) to his skill and probity, but he has proved a most remarkable instance of the fallacy of popular reputation. Had he been minister in easy peaceable times, his name might have been handed down to posterity with that of Sully; but



but the circumstances were too difficult for his genius to manage ; and his project of borrowing great loans in time of war, without laying on new taxes, and trusting their repayment to the uncertain resources of frugality, is now decried by every writer, whether royalist or republican. His frugality was supposed to be obnoxious to the queen, and on her the odium of his dismissal was chiefly laid. With more justice might it have been laid on the parliaments, who were jealous of one of his best schemes, the chusing provincial assemblies to superintend the levying of taxes. But Maria Antonia was a foreigner, an Austrian, and a weak, frail woman ; it therefore suited the pride of the nation, and the pride inherent in the very sex of man, to lay the principal blame upon her influence.

His successors in administration saw the gulph they were falling into, and even Vergennes, (the minister of foreign affairs) the bitterest enemy of England, perceived it. Accordingly peace was concluded in 1783, the States of America were divided

for ever from Great Britain, Spain regained Minorca and Florida, but France made no territorial acquisition but the poor little island of Tobago, and Holland was obliged to content itself with losing Negapatman.

Now came the time when France and Holland were to be repaid for all their expences by the golden harvest of the American trade—that harvest turned out very unproductive, and each nation, instead of blaming its own envious ambition, fell to blaming its own rulers, and wishing for a change of government. Had France really assumed moderation, and spent some years in quietly repairing its losses, all its future convulsions might have been prevented. But Vergennes' enmity against England was implacable, and one of his means of satisfying it was by closely keeping up the new-formed alliance with Holland, and putting it out of the Stadtholder's power to reconcile his country with England. To promote this end, a Frenchman, the Count de Mallebois, was chosen by the French party in Holland to command

command the Dutch armies upon a new danger which threatened the Republic.

The ever-restless and ever-unsuccessful Joseph the Second had in the winter of 1783 urged a new claim against Holland,\* demanding the free navigation of the Scheldt, in contradiction to the treaty of Westphalia; and the cession of Maestricht, in consequence of an old promise made by Holland to Spain in the hour of its greatest distress in 1673. The French were now called upon to defend their new ally, and here, if ever, it must be owned, that some effects of Austrian influence were discernible in French councils. Yet if the queen did prevent a war between her brother and her husband, she could not prevent such an interposition of France as terrified Joseph into giving up his ill-concerted scheme, and contenting himself with a promise that the Scheldt should be opened as far as Saftingen, and that ten millions of livres should be paid him as a

\* A curious work of Mirabeau written on the navigation of the Scheldt will be quoted hereafter.

ransom of Mæstricht, of which sum France engaged to pay the half. This is the only instance in which I am able to discover the slightest weakness in the efforts of France occasioned by the prevalence of Austrian councils. It was not Austria that weakened the efforts of France during the war of 1778; that court had shared with all Germany, nay with all Europe, that ill-judged envy which our wealth had excited (and still excites) and had rejoiced to see us humbled by France. But though we seemed humbled for a time, our spirit revived as unsubdued as ever; the French were conscious that in the last forty years they had lost half their colonies, and gained nothing but Corsica and Tobago (which the nation did not care for) some unknown cause they supposed must have crippled their exertions, and they looked for it in the Austrian alliance, the rather because that alliance had been confirmed by a marriage with a lady who was disliked.

The quarter towards which the French now intended to direct their efforts, was the English possessions in India, and for that reason



son they exerted themselves so earnestly in the ensuing years to overturn the Stadtholder.

Various books, pamphlets, and manifestoes were written in Holland and England on the subject of the Stadtholder's prerogatives, and the justice or injustice of abridging them. But a work published in 1789 for J. Edwards, Pall-Mall, and called, "History of the late Revolution in the Dutch Republic," removes the mist from the splendid phantoms of *equal liberty* and *magnanimous protection*, and displays the malice of France towards England, as the ground of this determined zeal against the house of Nassau. What I said in regard to Dalrymple, I apply equally to the book just quoted:—if any Dutch republican or French royalist (for this crime was the crime of monarchy) can refute the author's assertions, let them do it, but till then the book must pass for creditable authority, and it is plain that the author was in the secret, and not likely at least to err from ignorance.

In his 122d page he asserts, that the strength of the Dutch in Asia was the original motive of the great exertions made by France to secure their alliance, and that even the mission of M. de la Vauguyon was but the resumption of a project formed by Choiseul soon after the peace of 1763. He then proceeds to relate, for seven pages together, how all the powers of India, Tippoo Saib, the Marattas, the Nizam, were to be induced by negotiation to join in a new league against England; that fleets were to be sent to the harbour of Trincomale, French troops to Pondicherry, Dutch troops to their own settlements under the command of the intriguing Rhingrave de Salm, and at last says, that nothing but the hopes of realizing this project could justify the *enormous expences* by which they supported their influence in the republic. These imputations will appear the more probable when we recollect the embassy from Tippoo, received at that very period with affected magnificence and satisfaction. But the Dutch India Company felt their own weakness, and were unwilling to engage in schemes so expensive as might ruin them,

them, even if they succeeded. It therefore became still more expedient to overturn the whole frame of government in Holland. The aristocratic party was not strong enough singly to destroy the Stadtholder, and the people had hitherto been attached to his cause. Democratic principles were, therefore, set up for the first time in Holland, and the common people were encouraged to form themselves into *corps francs*, who chose their own captains, in the same manner as (by a most awful retributive judgment) the *gardes nationaux* were instituted to overturn the power of the French court. The effect of all these manœuvres is well known; the Stadtholder was driven from the Hague in 1786, and restored to his dignities in 1787, by the joint interposition of Prussia and England, who acquired a transient glory by that successful revolution. A philosophical, impartial mind cannot avoid two reflections on this subject. First, that as the Stadtholders owed their elevation to the tumultuary risings of the populace, they had less right to complain when the populace rose against them. Secondly,

that although the Orange party were excused by *dire necessity* when they admitted the Prussians, yet they set the fatal precedent of calling in foreigners, and irrecoverably weakened the spirit of national independence.

France, after having encouraged the Dutch republicans with assurances of protection, left them at last to their fate, feeling its own inability, from the bad state of its finances, to fulfil its engagements, and thus confessing its own weakness to foreigners, to mal-contented, and to its own officers and soldiers. Fleury, D'Ormesson, Calonne, had, one after another, succeeded to Neckar; the two first were honest but inefficient; Calonne had acknowledged abilities, but a suspicious character, and his faults were aggravated by the hatred of the parlements, who never forgave the part he had taken against M. de la Chaletais, procureur general of Brittany.

He assembled the Notables in 1787, and revealed the immense deficit which existed in the revenues of France, compared to  
its



its expences. These unexpected tidings, which had been studiously concealed to the last moment, occasioned such universal horror, that no scheme which he proposed could be listened to, nor could the court of France ever regain the confidence of the people. The extravagance of the Queen was supposed to be the chief cause of this deficit, and to this general charge was added a particular one of sending money clandestinely to her brother the Emperor; and the ready belief of this most improbable tale fully shews the aversion of the people to the house of Austria.\* The enormous sums spent in the American war, or sacrificed since the peace, to support the French influence in Holland, were passed over in silence, because these objects fell in with the spirit of the nation, and the nation did not chuse to blame itself.

The Archbishop of Sens succeeded to Calonne, and was obliged to promise the

\* Another imputation was sometimes brought against her, that she intended to give up Lorraine to the Emperor. Here we may trace the old aversion to the house of Lorraine.

States General at some indefinite period. He engaged in fresh contests with the Parlements, endeavoured to establish in their place a cour plénier, to enregister the King's decrees, and drove on his projects with such indiscreet violence, as obliged him to resign in 1788. Neckar was recalled as the saviour of France; but his indecision fatally blasted the good that might have been derived from his popularity. He gave the privilege of a double representation to the third estate, and yet made no regulations to settle the manner in which the three estates were to vote, whether in one, two, or three chambers. They assembled in May, 1789, and the quarrels that were the natural consequences of the weak and varying measures of the ministry, produced the insurrection of Paris, and the taking of the Bastille, on the 14th of July, and hence followed that chain of stupendous events known under the name of the FRENCH REVOLUTION.

At that awful word—THE FRENCH REVOLUTION, such an abyss presents itself before the eyes of the terrified historian,

rian, that imagination and memory both recoil from the contemplation. Volumes have already been written on the events of six years, and an equal number of volumes would not suffice to unfold the secret springs of each event, many of which may, indeed, be guessed at in the present moment ; but, through the mists of passion and prejudice, cannot be seen distinctly. Those circumstances most interesting to Englishmen are the subject of our present discussion. It is certain, that when the revolution began, England was peaceable, happy, and great : it is equally certain, that our situation at this moment is altered for the worse ; and the cause of this unhappy change must excite our most eager curiosity. Opposition lays the blame on the ministry, ministry on the opposition : an author very little connected with either party, may be allowed to observe some errors on both sides, but must think with regret that the principal errors have been committed by that party which boasts the most strongly of its zeal for civil and religious freedom. From the very first instant, they espoused the cause of the French revolution with

enthusiastic violence, and the shame of contradicting their first sentiments has obliged them to tolerate what it is to be hoped that few of them could approve. I will not lay so difficult a task upon them as to compare the evils of the ancient government with those of the revolution, but I could wish them to take in their hands that plan of constitution proposed by the king, and scornfully rejected, on the 23d of June, 1789; first read it impartially, then let their imagination survey the scenes of blood, rapine, devastation, which have overspread France, Europe, the West Indies; survey all the crimes that every party has committed in the heat of exasperated pride, and then answer my question: whether before that sword of civil discord was drawn, that sword which never can be sheathed! it would not have been the act of true patriotism, for the tiers etat to have accepted that constitution as a general plan, insisting only upon particular amendments?

But I do not censure them for having either overlooked or disapproved that constitution



stitution at the time; I should not even censure them, if they had simply said, that the tyranny of the government rendered violence more pardonable in the French than in any other nation; but I do censure them, and impute many evil consequences to their rash, their indiscriminate applause of the revolution; and I shall give some reasons why they should have abstained from it, as *men* in general, and as Englishmen in particular.

In the first place, the general temper of the French nation was not fitted to receive at once the gift of unlimited and unconditional freedom. Under the mask of urbanity and gentleness, a close observer might discern a disposition much more inclined to faction, revenge, incessant quarrels, and pertinacious hatred, than in those English minds whom the French affected to despise as savages. Old Montagne said of them, long ago, “ Set three Frenchmen down in  
 “ the deserts of Africa, and before a month  
 “ is elapsed, they will begin to worry one  
 “ another;” and elsewhere, he observes, that the excesses of the civil wars had  
 brought

brought many of his countrymen to so infernal a temper, that without any personal enmity, they took delight in seeing their fellow-creatures suffer. Not that any country can boast of *humanity* during civil and religious wars; but more instances of savage cruelty can be brought from French history than from English. But this was not all. Even in the present age, the most trifling, contemptible circumstances, a quarrel about precedence, a quarrel about two authors, nay, about \*two musicians; would so inflame the Parisians, that they could scarcely bear each other's company. When such a violent spirit was called forth on matters of real consequence, a philosopher might easily have concluded that the effect would be terrible. Add to this, the credulity of the French, and their disposition to believe their enemies guilty of the blackest and most unnatural crimes. Read their memoirs from Lewis the Fourteenth down to the present day,

\* See the pamphlets, on Rousseau's quarrel with the French opera; and a drama of Mademoiselle de Genlis, called Les Faux Amis.

and observe if in English memoirs you can find as dreadful a catalogue of imputations, murder, poison, and crimes, whose deformity protects them from being explained; and yet observe how very few (at least of the stories of poison) are grounded upon probable facts. If it be said, that such a temper of mind is the consequence of despotism, I do not deny it, but only assert, that they should have been brought by degrees from despotism to liberty, and, as one of their own writers expressed it, have gone through a thirty year's political education, to fit them for the blessing of a free constitution.

Secondly, the ferocity which stained the very dawn of French liberty, and mingled itself with their celebrated taking of the Bastille, ought to have startled those men who had *humanity* for ever on their lips; and, above all, have startled those female authors who so unaccountably forgot the gentleness of their nature in their vehemence against the old French government. These crimes were not merely the ebullitions of sudden revenge; they were employed

ployed as systematic means of forcing the consent of courtiers, priests, and nobles, if not by the whole National Assembly, yet by those leaders of party who guided its measures. They were justified by Mirabeau, by Lameth, by Barnave, of whom the two last fell victims to the cruel spirit they had encouraged. Now that the present French government abhors the Orleans party, it is no longer denied that murder and cruelty were kept in constant pay by the treasures of the Duke of Orleans,\* and it is now more lawful for an author to speak freely of the beginning of the revolution in Paris than it once was in London. A remarkable circumstance of French ferocity, the mangling and insulting the dead bodies of the slain, ought particularly to have struck such philosophers as were versed in classical antiquity, and remembered all the efforts of Grecian legislators to prevent similar actions. It is easy for a cold, logical head, to prove that cruelty does not hurt the insensible; but

\* See the work intituled, *Conjuration du Duc d'Orleans.*



those men who lived when human nature was emerging from the savage state, thought very differently. They called in superstition to the aid of humanity; they invented those gods of hell to whom the dead were consecrated, and who revenged insults to their bodies by the severest punishments on the living offenders.\* Those wise men knew that whether or no such cruelty affects the dead, it has the most certain tendency to debase and degrade the hearts and tempers of the living. The experience of the last six years has confirmed the lessons of antiquity, and we may fairly trace the spirit which prompted the massacres of the 2d of September, to that spirit which dismembered the bodies of Flesselles, of Berthier, and Launay, tore out their bleeding hearts, and dipped them in cups of wine, whilst all the framers of the *Rights of Man* sat by trembling, lest they should utter one over-severe word against the excesses of patriotism.

\* See, for instance, the scene between Creon and Tiresias, in Sophocles' *Antigone*.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, the aversion to which the word *aristocracy* was instantly condemned at Paris, ought to have excited more apprehension in the minds of such characters as, like Dr. Priestley, for instance, prided themselves on their general knowledge of history.

Sherlock, in his sublime parallel between Jesus and Mahomet, exclaims, “ Go to your natural religion!”

I say, to the admirers of France, Go to your adored republicans! Go to that Sidney whom you have idolized above much worthier Englishmen, and hear him confess, “ that the wisest and best men of antiquity preferred aristocracy to democracy.” It is true, that the aristocracy so unfeelingly condemned to the gibbet in French popular songs, means titles and feudal prerogatives. But the meaning of aristocracy in Greece was the government of men of education and property, and at last signified the government of magistrates chosen by the people, in opposition  
to

to the government of the multitude.— Was there no danger that some bold innovator should teach the French to dislike equally the best and the worst senses of the word? Let the excesses of Robespierre and his associates answer that question!

Fourthly, the contemptuous scorn with which the first national assembly rejected the idea of two legislative assemblies controuling one another, should have occasioned some suspense of approbation in those English writers who had been so devoted to the American cause.

Go to your republicans! may again be repeated to those zealots: go to an American republican writer, for a long chain of historical proofs which militate against the leading principle of the first French constitution.

The work I mean, is Adams's Defence of the American Constitution, lately republished, under the title of the History of Republics. It is remarkable, that

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Turgot, whose memory was revered by the French constitutionalists, had wrote a letter, in which he censured the Americans for retaining governors and senates, and not "concentrating all power in the body of the people." Adams was highly displeased with his opinions, and wrote three volumes of Political Controversy, to disprove them. He considers this idea of concentrating all power in one body of representatives as leading to the worst of tyranny, and, amongst other arguments, brings the authorities of some English republicans (especially of Harrington) to prove his system of the necessity of one executive and two legislative powers. When to this, we add the works that Neckar, Mounier, and several of the early opponents of the court were publishing on the defects of the first constitution, it might have dissuaded our English societies from exulting as if the problem of a perfect constitution was at last solved, because they thought the French system of representation was better than the English, without once inquiring whether we had not other



other advantages to counter-balance that single defect.

Besides these general reasons, there were some particular ones, that should have influenced Britons to apprehend the consequences of a French revolution. In the first place, although the spirit of the nation would at all events have made a revolution of some kind, yet the particular direction of that national spirit against the court was given by two or three factions devoured by selfish ambition, and burning with revenge against the queen and the house of Austria. The family of D'Aiguillon turned patriots from this cause, and the Orleans family were actuated still more strongly by it.

The Duke of Orleans, one of the most vicious and unprincipled men of the age, had been disappointed of the reversion of the place of high-admiral held by his father-in-law, the Duke of Penthièvre, and ever since had engaged in a course of hostilities against the court; nor did he feel any passion so strongly, as the desire of

being revenged on the queen, who had long treated him with aversion and contempt. In this temper of mind, other ambitious men made him their easy tool, flattering him with hopes of governing the kingdom under the title of lieutenant-general, and perhaps of even attaining to royalty. Such tainted instruments should have made good men suspect the cause itself, but there was a special reason which made that aversion to the queen diffused by the Orleans party to the remotest corners of France, interesting to the English nation.\* There can be no surer means to mortify a queen who interferes with public government, than to involve her husband in a war with her own family, for the nation must ever be suspicious that she does not wish ill to her natural relations. The fatal quarrels between Joseph and his Flemish subjects held out a strong temptation to interfere, and though such interference was not immediate, yet equal pains were taken to in-

\* See Arthur Young's *Tour in France* for various anecdotes of that kind.

flame the nation against the queen, and against the house of Austria itself.\* Wars between France and Austria have generally involved England most unfortunately in the contest, and the first part of this Essay has been employed in explaining the political reasons. If this argument alone was deemed insufficient, the character and temper of Mirabeau afforded very forcible reasons for alarm and caution.

Of all the actors in this stupendous drama, who by turns have

“ Strutted and fretted

“ Their hour on the stage, and then

“ Been heard no more !”

There was none who through the whole progress of his turbulent part, bid so fair as Mirabeau, to become first-minister and director of the new constitutional kingdom. Decried for his vices he had yet obtained (I know not how) the universal consent of

\* M. Peyssonel, who had been employed in Turkey, was a principal writer against the house of Austria, and the treaty of 1756.

all parties to his superior abilities. He had been one of the chief instigators of the Duke of Orleans' ambition, but at last despised him, and was supposed, just before he died, to have made his peace with the court. This man appears through all his works to have been fired with the most determined hatred to Austria and to England, and his *Doutes sur la Liberté de l'Escaut*, affords such convincing proofs of those two passions, that however stale the narration may seem, it will be necessary to give a concise idea of that work. It was written to prove the justice of the Dutch title to the possession and consequent restraint of the Scheld, and to excite the French to take the opportunity of the Emperor Joseph's attack on Holland to seize the Low Countries, and convert them, as he pretends, into an independent republic. But he speaks so \* feelingly of the forty-three millions of livres which France received annually from the Netherlands in Marshal Saxe's time, that there is great reason to believe, had he been first

\* Page 88 of Mirabeau's *Doutes*.



minister of France, the name of independence would only have proved what it proved in 1792, a lure to entice the Brabançons to admit French troops, who then compelled them to send all their money to Paris to retrieve the bankrupt finances of their pretended deliverers. In the course of his argument he speaks with asperity of the house of Nassau, and of England with greater asperity still, softening it now and then with some compliments to the nation, and seeming to lay the blame on its government, but attacking all those commercial laws and schemes of distant enterprize, which take their rise from the temper of the nation at large, and not from its ministers. The act of navigation, says he,\* perhaps, ought to make the English be considered as the enemies of human kind. In other places † he predicts, that England will be driven out from India in ten years time, and that it will shortly be reduced to a power of the third class, and deprived of all its influence out of its own island, which, he says, if the English are wise

\* Page 77. † Page 8 and 11.

they will consider as a happiness. One of his most remarkable passages in regard to the East Indies will require to be given at full length.\*

“ The Europeans as a military power,  
 “ or rather as regimental murderers, will  
 “ shortly be driven out of India, and I  
 “ bless heaven for it. The Indians know  
 “ at last that their tyrants are not invinci-  
 “ ble, and that they may in their turn be  
 “ acquainted with the *Furcæ Candinæ*;  
 “ but whilst we expect this happy event,  
 “ so well deserved, so necessary to the peace  
 “ of Hindostan, and even to that of Eu-  
 “ rope; this event that avarice will drive  
 “ off as long as possible, whilst wisdom  
 “ ought to prepare itself for it; our military  
 “ and marine joined to that of the Dutch,  
 “ is by means of the Bay of Trinco-  
 “ male, in the Island of Ceylon, assured of  
 “ decisive superiority in the Bay of Bengal.”

This essay of Mirabeau's was written at the very time which the history of the late

revolution in Holland (formerly quoted) fixes for the intrigues of the French to draw in Holland, in consequence of their alliance, to exhaust itself in efforts for destroying our power in the East Indies, and therefore it affords strong confirmations of the assertions of that author.

When we remember that Coligny, a more virtuous leader of party than Mirabeau, could think of no other way to reconcile papists and protestants than an attack upon Flanders, we might well suppose that the same means may be thought of to reconcile royalists and republicans; and we see how these three degrees, power over Flanders, influence over Holland, and ruin of English power in Hindostan, were the natural climax of successful policy which presented itself alike to the courtier Vergennes, and to the democratic Mirabeau.

When Mirabeau died, I own, that for a short interval I had hoped that the new French government might become more friendly to England. But the prevalence of a faction headed by Brissot de Warville,

soon painfully undeceived me, for I saw in his works, as for instance, in the three volumes of his Travels to America, the same aversion to the Nassau family, the same malice against England, as in Mirabeau ; the same detestation of our acts of navigation and settlements in the East Indies, though more disguised by hypocritical blandishments.

Happy would it have proved for England, perhaps, for France itself, if our dissenters, and that party in the opposition who have lately courted them, had been induced by one or all of these arguments to consider the French revolution with coolness, and balance its advantages and dangers fairly against each other.

Instead of this necessary prudence, a party who set itself up as uttering the voice of the English nation, made both countries resound with the voice of unmixed, intemperate, and unreflecting applause. On the 4th of November, 1789, Dr. Price preached, and afterwards published, his famous sermon on the love of our country, and the  
committee



committee of the society instituted to commemorate the Revolution, resolved, that it\* becomes the people to establish societies throughout the kingdom on revolutionary principles, to maintain a correspondence with each other, and form a *grand concentrated union* of the friends of freedom. It is hard to say whether the resolution or the sermon was most indiscreet, and most full of dangerous consequences. The hard words of *grand concentrated union*, were evidently copied from that mysterious revolution jargon which began to prevail in France, and from that club which had begun at Versailles under the name of the club Breton, was continued at Paris under the name of the club des Jacobins, was beginning to spread its *affiliated* branches through the provinces, and after causing four or five revolutions, has at last been condemned by the convention, as not only fit to destroy, but incompatible with the safety of any regular government, republican as well as monarchical. It is probable that its first imitators in England did not foresee

\* See page 12 of the Appendix to Dr. Price.

the dangerous lengths to which such clubs might proceed, but then what right have they to extol their political wisdom and foresight beyond the opposite party, to whom the name of jacobins always gave a sensation of terror.

We are next to consider the revolution principles which this *grand concentrated union* is to diffuse. The Doctor has reduced them to three.

“ First, the right to liberty of conscience  
“ in religious matters.”

“ Secondly, the right to resist power  
“ when abused.”

“ Thirdly, the right to chuse our own  
“ governors, *to cashier them for misconduct*,  
“ and to frame a government for our-  
“ selves.”

On the two first of these principles I have little to say ; but as to the third, I must own that it seems to me one of the most imprudent, ill-worded, and dangerous principles that a heated disputant ever was  
tempted

tempted to utter. The words that the Whig authors about the time of the revolution chiefly used, to express those causes which justified deposing of rulers, were tyranny and *breach of original compact*. Both expressions are vague, but at least they imply some conduct so terrible and so criminal, that it must be palpable to the bulk of mankind. But *misconduct* comprehends every frailty that flesh is heir to; comprehends all the errors that even good men may commit; and might sanction the deposition of every ruler upon earth: for who will dare to lay their hands on their hearts, and say, they never in the course of their government were guilty of misconduct.

It may be said, that Dr. Price never meant that his words should be taken in so wild a sense; but why then did he not in his later editions add some corrective, that the ignorant might understand he meant such misconduct alone as was grossly criminal. The word *cashiering* also is the most contemptuous that could have been chosen, and being borrowed from military discipline, that most arbitrary of jurisdictions,

looks

looks as if it was intended to allow no more freedom of will, or dignity of office, to a king, than to a subaltern in the army.

As to the right of framing a government for ourselves, it is an undoubted right when a community first establishes itself as an independent state; but if it is meant, that the said community may totally change its government whenever it pleases, I only appeal to the recent examples of France, Holland, and Geneva, as proofs, that the exercise of such a right is neither favourable to tranquillity, virtue, or happiness.

This passage, in one word, seems to have been whispered by some evil genius on purpose to render the principles of liberty odious. The high-flown principles of passive obedience and non-resistance were almost argued out of doors, and by a tacit confession disputants were agreed, that there is in every country some law, made by original compact, which no king can violate. But these words, which seemed to imply, that the people were not bound by the same compact which bound their rulers, first



paved the way for the open avowal of that terrible principle, by Mr. Paine, and then (by the natural progress of the human mind in eager disputes) drove the opponents of Dr. Price into using indiscreet expressions in their turn. Moderation (at this crisis) might have led the world to happiness; imprudent zeal has very near overwhelmed it with the opposite evils of despotism and anarchy.

Many other censures might be passed on the famous sermon of Dr. Price. I know it is invidious to censure the dead, but thinking sincerely, that it has had a great share in causing our present evils, it was impossible not to take notice of it. Throughout the whole sermon there is not one word against carrying on civil contentions with a ferocious and sanguinary spirit. Though scenes had already passed in France, which sickened humanity to think of, there is not one caution against imitating their example in that respect, however it might deserve to be followed in others. The preacher purposely turned out of his road to lament, that some assertors of liberty sullied so good  
a cause

a cause by irregular lives. Why did he not also turn aside to censure cruelty, that most unchristian of all vices? Had he argued like a late republican French writer, that honest men, by punishing guilt in a revolutionary manner, had corrupted opinion in its source, and consecrated illegal arbitrary measures; and that such actions were more dangerous precedents in the cause of virtue, than in the cause of crimes, because they were more likely to seduce weak minds; then Dr. Price would have obviated much of the danger of his work. But when he was so indiscriminate in his applause, it was natural for zealous churchmen to think, that zealous dissenters had no objection to crimes when they led to the ruin of a national church. At that moment of time there had been no contest in England on the subject of the French revolution, sharp enough to have naturally drawn forth such intemperate enthusiasm in its praise, as tempted a Christian in the pulpit to apply the *Nunc Dimittis* of Simeon. The real ground of all this display of eloquence lay deeper; most probably it may be traced to the unsuccessful attempt made by the dissenters,

senters, to have the Test act repealed. Mr. Pitt had taken part against them, for which they branded him with the name of ungrateful, because most of them had supported his cause in the great contest of 1784 against the coalition. Mr. Fox and the opposition had, in the preceding winter, entangled themselves with some assertions relative to the regency, that were thought not strictly consonant to the rights of Parliament. Here, therefore, seemed a fair opening for the one side to be revenged, and for the other to retrieve its character, by tormenting Mr. Pitt with praises of the French revolution, which he could neither join in, nor contradict, without offence.

The consequences of this imprudent policy have been very different from what they expected. Had the French revolution never taken place, it is most likely that the Test act would have been repealed by this time, if we consider the smallness of the majority against it. But now the dissenters are farther from their point than ever; Mr. Fox is not much nearer the ministry; no Englishman has been the gainer, and our  
unhappy

unhappy country has deeply suffered from this revengeful project.

The Parliament of England met in January 1790 ; and cautious prudence was the part assumed by the ministers, both in the King's speech and in their own. It does not seem a great breach of charity to assert, that this prudence was particularly displeasing to Mr. Fox, since he took so bold a step to lead it astray, as praising one of the most dangerous circumstances of the French revolution, the defection of the troops from their officers. I may be allowed to call it dangerous, since that conduct which was then attributed to patriotism, is now openly at Paris attributed to bribery ; and the directory and its friends are perpetually inveighing against the base arts now used by the factious, to seduce soldiers from their lawful commanders.

Mr. Fox took his opportunity to introduce this eulogium when the army estimates were voted, and uncalled, unprovoked, went out of his way, and contradicted his own arguments by opposing the estimates as too large,



large, and yet adding, that a large army was not so dangerous as formerly, since the noble example set by the French soldiers. This assertion, as might well be expected, called up several of the military members of Parliament to oppose his doctrine. But still the opposition were disappointed, and could never drive Mr. Pitt into openly giving his opinion of the French revolution. Such a restraint was necessary at the time, because the public disapprobation of a leading member of the English government might have hazarded the lives of all the Englishmen in France, but it has cramped all his arguments ever since; for to set the principles and practice of the French in their true light, it is necessary to shew, that the seeds of all the evils which have happened under the two last assemblies, were sown by the rashness and vanity of that first constituent assembly, which our opposition still affect to praise.

The shaft which opposition aimed at Mr. Pitt, in 1790, recoiled at that moment unexpectedly upon themselves. For the heat of Mr. Burke's temper made him

L

burst

burst forth into expressions of abhorrence of the French revolution, which Fox and Sheridan never forgave: since they were in direct contradiction to the cue which inferior actors were used to take implicitly from the managers in the great political drama. Hence arose a schism in the opposition, which I am afraid Mr. Pitt beheld with an ill-natured satisfaction, neither side discovering the evils which these intemperate discussions would finally bring upon their country.

The ministry, at that time, could hardly be at their ease, since Flanders was then in a state of open insurrection against Joseph II. and a warfare in Flanders has ever been the signal for anxiety in England. I do not charge the French with fomenting those troubles in their origin, but they have been charged with sending emissaries to see what advantage could be made of them, and they declined to succour the Flemish only, because they found the government in the hands of an aristocracy.

As a slight confirmation of this opinion, it may be mentioned, that Camille de Desmoulines,

moulines, then a low scribbler, afterwards a demagogue, and at last a victim of the guillotine, published in November, 1789, a journal called *Revolutions de France et de Brabant*, in which he endeavoured to unite the two causes in one. Attempts were soon made to introduce more democracy into this new-formed republic, perhaps with some reason and justice; but (as the foreign gazettes related) that dangerous signal, the French tricolor cockade, appeared on the heads of the democrats at Brussels; and no Englishman, zealous for his country, could see that token without reluctance.

A late author, (Mr. Miles) has blamed the ministry for not assuming the protection of this new republic, and defending it against the house of Austria. In answer to this, I must refer to the Letters of the Emperor Joseph to General Dalton, published at Brussels by the emperor's bitterest enemies, purposely to disgrace him. We need not therefore doubt the genuineness of the sentiments contained in them, which

in spite of this intended malice, redound to his honour, In the pages 177 and 178, we find the emperor strictly commanding his ministers to lend no ear, either to the Dutch patriots, or to the French, who were discontented with the new constitution, observing, that it would give a plea to foreign powers to attack him openly. It is never lawful for a foreign power to interfere in domestic quarrels, unless sanctioned by the law of retaliation; and after this public proof of the justice of the house of Austria, neither England nor France ought to have set the first example of injustice. On the other hand, the situation of England was entangled with many difficulties; for if we treated the Flemings as rebels, and drove them to despair, they might offer their country to France. It was probably in that view, that our ministers rather shewed them friendship than enmity; kept the English resident still at Brussels, and joined to guarantee their old constitution when re-conquered by the arms of the Emperor Leopold, in the end of 1790. But what signified these embarrassments, which might have broke the



sleep of Sir William Temple, and King William, of Godolphin and Somers, to the new-fashioned patriots of the present age. They might meet to celebrate the revolution, but it was not King William's memory or principles which they meant to commend; they were going upon a new plan, and like Shaftsbury and Arlington, and other heroes of the cabal, talked only of treaties of alliance with France. The famous vote of renunciation of conquests, passed in May 1790, served for a while to blind the eyes of honest well-meaning enthusiasts; but whoever looked into motives, and was not satisfied with pompous words, might easily see, that this vote was no part of a regular unambitious pacific plan, but was the effusion of a hasty moment, to satisfy the people, and gall the court.

A dispute had arisen between England and Spain, relative to the fur trade on the north-west coast of America; and the king of France sent a message to the national assembly to inform them of it, and to desire their assistance to equip a fleet. *It has been generally supposed*, that the court of France

wished at that time for a war with England, and were disposed to try the remedy, so unfeelingly, but so generally recommended, a foreign war to prevent a civil one. The people were worked up to a sudden fit of rage on this occasion, not because they hated a quarrel with England, but because they thought this message was a cover to some plot against the revolution, carried on in concert with the Spaniards. In the debates that followed it is remarkable, that Mirabeau, the inveterate enemy of England, insisted, that the power of peace and war should be left to the king. A decree was passed, requiring, first a formal notification of the king's opinion, and then a decree of the assembly previous to a declaration of war; and those vaunting words were added, that the French nation would never take up arms but in defence of its liberty, and that it renounced all conquests.

It is surprizing how much this vague enthusiastic decree was applauded, even by some, who in other respects could see through the flimsy veil of patriotism; as for instance, the *Courier du Bas-Rhin*, a  
 paper

paper conducted by some acute observer, after passing some criticisms on the national assembly, adds, "They have done one noble thing, however, in proclaiming peace to all mankind." *All mankind*, however, was to be understood with an exception to all priests, gentlemen, and kings; nor did England, in any shape, or under any government, stand a chance of being included. For after the people had been quieted by these high-sounding words, a committee was appointed to examine into all existing treaties of alliance; and they made a report favourable to a defensive alliance with Spain. In such a case it was only necessary for Spain to insert into its manifesto, that England was the first aggressor, and then they might call upon France for assistance, who probably would not have refused taking a West-India island or two, under some other name than that of conquest. Pamphlets were written, and speeches made, to animate the nation against English ambition and selfishness, at the very time that the French clubs were duping, (as I must ever think it) Doctor Price, Lord Stanhope, and the English clubs,

with expressions of friendship, directed not to the government of the nation, but to particular self-elected societies. But no immediate evil followed; Spain, conscious of its own, and its allies' weakness, shrunk from the contest; the danger of a French war was deferred for a while, and people rashly shut their eyes to the probability that it would be renewed as soon as the government of France was settled. Had the leaders of the French revolution been as pacific in their intentions, as they were at first in their declarations, they had a plain path before them. There are two obvious precautions to be used by wise and moderate statesmen: first not to provoke the jealousy of other governments, by the idea of hostile intentions; and secondly, not to tempt the ambition of other governments by the idea of internal dissensions and weakness. I flatter myself it will appear in the course of the narration, that both these rules were completely violated by the French, and that the second of these rules was strangely neglected by our English patriots. The first provocation given to foreign powers, dates as far back



as the 4th of August 1789, when all feudal rights and services were abolished. In that hasty theatrical manner of voting by acclamation, so incident to a single assembly, and in particular to an assembly of petulant Frenchmen, they had included in the decree all the feudal rights belonging to the Duke of Wirtemberg, the Duke of Deux Ponts, and other German princes, who had possessions within Alsace, and the other districts, once belonging to the German empire. These estates, with their appurtenant rights, had been guaranteed by the treaty of Westphalia, and we have already seen, how sorely the German diet had endured the relinquishment of sovereignty over those territories, and consequently how likely it was to be thrown, by this sudden and violent exertion of sovereignty, by the national assembly, into the party, either of the mal-content Frenchmen, or of the house of Austria, (supposing the house of Austria malevolent to France). But what was this grave consideration to the lively spirit of Frenchmen, who would find it much more entertaining to read invidious and ridiculous accounts of the feudal system,

than

than to study father Bougeant's History of the Treaty of Westphalia, or the many treaties that have since been made to explain its particular articles? These rights were, therefore, voted away in a mass, as well as the rights of all possessors who were indisputable subjects of France; and no indemnifications were even talked of till several months after, when the spirit of resentment and political intrigue was roused in Germany, and could not be laid asleep so easily as at first. Nay, even then, when a member once observed, that as the possessing princes, (*princes possesseurs*) objected, that power was ill exchanged for money; the surest way to obviate all difficulties would be, to buy other lands in Germany, where the owners possessed the same rights, and give them to these princes, as their best indemnification. The assembly received this motion with disdain, and declared they never would take a step that would even appear to sanction the abominable feudal system. Thus they continued asserting the rights of nature above those of property, and therefore run the risque of provoking all the proprietors in Europe. It may seem impertinent in an  
unknown

unknown individual, to dictate in [what] manner a political negotiation should have been carried on; but as it is certain, that no worse steps for the happiness of Europe could have been taken than what were actually adopted, I will venture my opinion. The Assembly might, on the 4th of August, have protested, that the right of sovereignty belonged to France, (for there is little doubt that France always claimed it) but have declared, that for the sake of peace and good neighbourhood, they desired the king to enter into negotiations for indemnifications, either with the princes, or with the diet; and ordered that, till the end of the negotiations, the feudal rights and services should continue as usual; and, perhaps, the best indemnification would have been the suggestion of buying such other feudal estates, as chanced to be upon sale. It was said, the peasants of Alsace wanted immediate relief; but would it not have been better to have continued paying a few oppressive rents two or three years longer, and have avoided all the burdens laid on them by this present ruinous war? Let those men at least answer this question, who are perpetually

petually exaggerating the evils of war, and would have us sacrifice our very independence to France, rather than impose a single additional tax. There is no doubt that this hasty decision of the National Assembly was one of the seeds of the present war. It was immediately said, by all the discontented German proprietors, that this measure was the exact counterpart of those *chambres de re-union*, which have been mentioned as one of the great enormities of Lewis the Twelfth's reign; and, that strong alliances would be as necessary against this encroaching royal democracy, as against the absolute monarchy of France. But invasion of our rights is not the only cause of national enmity; contempt of foreign nations and foreign manners is equally powerful, and this contempt was shown in the most mortifying manner, from the very beginning of the revolution, but reached its highest pitch on the 19th of June, 1790. It had long been intended by the democrats to abolish all titles, and all subordination of rank; but the blow, though suspected by the nobles, even before the meeting of the states, was not struck, till that celebrated day,



day, and was preceded by a most extraordinary scene. M. de Cloots, a mal-content Prussian, at the head of a body of foreigners, English, Dutch, Spaniards, Italians, Americans, Turks, and Indians, entered the national assembly. It is reported, that his Europeans were teachers of languages then residing at Paris, and that his Asiatics were fellows dressed up in habits, borrowed from the opera wardrobe. Assuming the dignity of orator and ambassador of the human race, he pronounced the following wonderful harangue:\*

“ SIRS,

“ The awe-inspiring standards of the  
 “ French empire, are about to be displayed on the 14th of July, in the  
 “ Field of Mars, the same place where  
 “ *Julian trampled all prejudices under foot*;  
 “ this civic solemnity will not only be the  
 “ festival of the French, but the festival of  
 “ the human race. The trumpet which

\* Hist. de la Revolution, vol. 5, page 344.

“ sounds

“ founds the resurrection of a great nation;  
 “ has refounded to the four corners of the  
 “ world, and the joyful songs of a chorus  
 “ of twenty-five millions of freemen have  
 “ awakened the nations buried in a long  
 “ slavery. The wisdom, Sirs, of your de-  
 “ crees, the union of the children of France,  
 “ that ravishing picture, gives bitter anxi-  
 “ eties to despots, and just hopes to enslaved  
 “ nations.

“ We also have conceived a great thought,  
 “ and shall we venture to say, that it will give  
 “ the finishing stroke to this great national  
 “ day? A number of strangers from all  
 “ the countries of the earth ask to range  
 “ themselves in the midst of the Field of  
 “ Mars; and the cap of liberty which they  
 “ will elevate with transport, will be the  
 “ pledge of the approaching deliverance of  
 “ their unhappy fellow-citizens. The tri-  
 “ umphing generals of Rome took plea-  
 “ sure in dragging conquered nations, bound  
 “ to their chariots; and you, Sirs, by the  
 “ most honourable of contrasts, you will  
 “ see freemen in your train, whose country  
 “ is in chains, *but whose country will one*  
 “ day

“ *day be free, by the influence of your un-*  
 “ *shaken courage, and your philosophical*  
 “ *laws. Our wishes, and our homage, are*  
 “ *the bands that attach us to your trium-*  
 “ *phal chariot.*

“ No embassy ever was so sacred ; our  
 “ letters of credit are not written upon  
 “ parchment, but our mission is engraved  
 “ in everlasting characters in the hearts of  
 “ all men ; and, thanks to the authors of  
 “ the declaration of rights, these characters  
 “ will no longer be unintelligible to ty-  
 “ rants.

“ You have with truth acknowledged,  
 “ Sirs, that sovereignty resides in the peo-  
 “ ple. Now, the *people is every where* un-  
 “ der the yoke of dictators, who call them-  
 “ selves sovereigns in despite of your prin-  
 “ ciples. Dictatorship may be usurped,  
 “ but sovereignty is inviolable ; and the  
 “ ambassadors of tyrants could not honour  
 “ your august festival, like the greater part  
 “ of us, whose mission is tacitly owned by  
 “ our countrymen, by sovereigns under op-  
 “ pression.

“ What

“ What a lesson for despots ; what a  
 “ comfort for unfortunate nations ; when  
 “ we shall inform them, that the first na-  
 “ tion of Europe in assembling its stand-  
 “ ards, has given us the signal of the hap-  
 “ piness of France, and of both worlds.  
 “ We shall expect, Sirs, in a respectful  
 “ silence, the result of your deliberations on  
 “ the petition dictated to us by the enthu-  
 “ siasm of universal liberty.”

“ This petition,” says my author, “ was  
 “ received with a universal acclamation.”

How easy is it to see in this petition, and  
 in this acclamation, the seeds of that famous  
 decree of the 19th of November, 1792,  
 which the warmest friends of France will  
 not entirely justify ; and yet they do not  
 condemn, as they ought, the steps that in-  
 evitably led to it. Could the French refuse  
 assistance to any club who invited them to  
 free their country, when they admitted a  
 dozen school-masters to tell them, that  
 their countries expected liberty from the in-  
 fluence of their courage ? Such a refusal  
 would have looked as if this *unshaken cou-*  
*rage*



rage was a little more suspicious than any sovereign with one head, or with many; chuses to own to his flatterers.

The character of the speaker is as remarkable as the speech itself. He was, as before mentioned, a restless discontented Prussian settled at Paris, and being infected with that spirit of unbelief which Frederic had encouraged French wits to diffuse, in the course of the revolution affected to renounce his christian name of Jean Baptiste, and new name himself Anacharsis, the Scythian philosopher, and from his open impiety was sometimes called *the personal enemy of Jesus Christ*. He continued laying plans for a *universal Republic* till even Brissot laughed at his absurdity: he next became an accomplice of Roberspierre's enormous cruelties, and having excited that tyrant's jealousy, perished by that common death of French revolutionists—the guillotine.\*

\* This Anacharsis invented the term *Septembrizing* to express his approbation of the bloody second of September.

Such was that worthless madman to whom the first assertors of French liberty, the Fayette's, the Lameth's, the \* Mathieu de Montmorency's, had imprudently committed a dramatic scene which was destined to work up the assembly into an enthusiasm equal to voting the utter abolition of nobility. The words of the decree were little less offensive than the words of the speech to the prejudices of foreign nations, since it decreed in general terms that hereditary nobility was inconsistent with a free state. People seldom judge impartially of a transaction till it is brought home to themselves. I will, therefore, once for all, put a question to the friends of France, which I desire they will repeat to their own hearts, whenever they read of any letter from an English club, or deputation from aggrieved foreigners, to the national assembly. If the English parliament had received a deputation from Neckar, Mounier, or any other censurers of the French constitution, if *they* had told either of the houses, that the friends

\* I name these three members because they took a leading part in the debate which followed.

of government and property waited for the influence of the English to correct the excesses of democracy, would not such a rash step have excited the utmost indignation in France, and led ultimately to a war with England? If their consciences answer that question in the affirmative, let them suppose that Englishmen or Germans might be as jealous of national independence as Frenchmen. In this light, I cannot help considering the transactions of the 19th of June as the fire-brands which kindled the conflagration, whose wide-spreading fury we have all so much reason to deplore.

Previous to this embassy from the whole enslaved human species, a tragical application had been made of the principles of the French revolution at Avignon, a little state included in France, but subject to the Pope's government.\* The people rose against the Pope's legate, and against the old aristocratic municipality. Four unhappy gentlemen, of good moral character, were

\* See a work entitled Historical Sketch of the French Revolution.

murdered in cold blood, after having surrendered on promise of mercy, by the populace, worked up to madness from the absurd calumnies told them by their leaders, L'Escuyer and Tournal. These leaders immediately offered Avignon to the national assembly, who gave so faint a denial, as evidently shewed they only waited for a pretext to contradict their famous renunciation of conquest; in the mean while they agreed to put a French garrison into the town, and soon found the pretence they sought for in the cruel civil war which desolated that little tract of country. Happy would it have been if any one of these circumstances had convinced the more virtuous part of our English reformers, that new scenes of wickedness and bloodshed were opening on the world, rather than of happiness!—happy! if they would but have agreed to let foreign factions fight it out at leisure, and have preserved the same degree of neutrality, as our English writers had ever observed in the quarrels, for instance, of Sweden or Poland, where one might incline to the king, another to the diet, but each party used temperate language, and allowed



allowed that faults might exist on both sides.

Instead of this moderation, our *speculative* philosophers, and *practical* leaders of opposition, agreed on a festival to celebrate annually the taking of the Bastille, and by this unfortunate step consolidated the cause of English reform with that of the French constitution, and made all the ill-wishers to the one, ill-wishers to the other. Never had a similar step been taken by any English party towards any party in a foreign nation, not even in 1747, when the old Whigs exulted, perhaps to excess, in the revival of the power of the house of Nassau. Wherefore should this preference have been first held out to France? a nation so ferocious in their quarrels, so devoured by vanity, so ready to persecute all that will not imitate them; a nation so famous for over-reaching us in every kind of negotiation; a nation which, at that very time, suffered their dislike to England to peep forth in many little circumstances—as for instance, their readiness to join the Spaniards in any quarrel where England was con-

cerned ; their frequent invectives against the treaty of commerce, and their idle notions that Calonne had been bribed by Mr. Pitt to consent to it ; their readiness to believe, and their joy in believing, that Tippoo Saib had gained advantages over our forces in the East Indies,

I will allow that Englishmen might feel themselves not much displeased at the downfall of a court so hostile to their country, but those hostilities had proceeded from the temper of ministers, not from the natural temper of their kings, except in the instance of Lewis XIV. and we could have no assurance that such ambitious characters as Choiseul and Vergennes would not be employed under the new constitution. Mirabeau was at that time very near the summit of power, and Dumourier was beginning to ascend the first steps of its slippery ladder,

But enthusiasm repressed all sober consideration, the 14th of July was celebrated with parade and affectation, and the sentiments uttered on the occasion may be seen  
in

in the Appendix to the fourth edition of Dr. Price's Sermon, where, though he inserted them to catch popular applause, I believe they disgusted many good citizens. He, himself, saw the necessity to vindicate his toast, "May the parliament of England become a national assembly!" and to declare that he only meant a representation of the commons similar to that of the national assembly. But was this such an interpretation as the French were likely to put upon his words? In all their pamphlets, and, I believe, in all their private conversations, they perpetually confounded the question of an equal representation with the question of a single legislative assembly; believed that those who talked of the one, meant, in fact, the other; and that no nation was worthy of freedom, who could tolerate such a monster as an \*upper house of parliament, no matter whether hereditary or elective. In the very outset of

\* Chenier, a tragic poet in 1790, and a famous demagogue ever since, says in his preface to Charles IX. "Are the Greeks, Romans, and English, our models of perfection? Then shall we have slavery, gladiators, an upper house, a septennial parliament." What an insolent parallel!

their revolution, in August 1789,\* their pamphleteers told them by way of good news, “ On dit que les Anglois commencent à s’agiter, et qu’ils ne veulent plus avoir qu’une chambre de parlement : —i. e. “ It is said that the English begin to be agitated, and will have no more than one house of parliament. Two writers of different principles, Mr. Miles and Mr. Playfair, have both attested that a *total* change of the English constitution was expected and predicted at the houses of the great leaders of the first revolution. Little did those Frenchmen think that they should fall victims to their partiality for a simple † and ideal form of government—a single assembly; and that France was destined to give an early example to all other nations, that, if they pull down a *real* aristocracy, they must

\* The pamphlet was called *Histoire des Evenemens Remarquables, de Juillet et Aout 1789.*

† An expression used by Morse in his *American Geography* to describe a similar constitution in Pennsylvania.



build up a *fictitious* one as fast as possible, or be exposed to all the horrors of anarchy.

It could not escape observation how ready Dr. Price and his colleagues were to give up the honor of England, and call for censure on its faults, whilst writing to foreigners. Unnatural behaviour surely! at least it would bear that name from children to their parents in a private family. When one of the corresponding French clubs paid England some compliments on having set the first example of liberty; our revolution society took care to inform them, in return, how much we were inferior to the glorious example of France. Whilst the outward language of these French societies breathed peace and amity, their inward spirit seemed a heated zeal, and a malignant abhorrence\* of all other governments, fit only to produce the consequences we know to have followed. What is “ this fire that will in-  
“ flame every mind, and throughout all  
“ Europe reduce into ashes the shackles of  
“ despotism?” what is “ this union of the

\* See, amongst others, pages 22 and 38 of Dr. Price's Appendix.

“ two first empires in the world,” that is to  
 “ waken the courage of all enslaved nations,  
 “ and give the most overpowering lesson to  
 “ their mad despots ?” To learn the extent  
 of these declamations, we must read the  
 French journals and pamphlets of the year  
 1790, and the decrees of the national as-  
 sembly ; we shall discover that in the French  
 opinion every nation was enslaved, in  
 which there existed hereditary titles, a se-  
 nate, or a church possessed of landed pro-  
 perty. Now, if we join to all this, Dr.  
 Price’s scheme\* of a confederation between  
 England and France, Holland and America,  
 we shall be more and more inclined to sus-  
 pect that the French were proposing to their  
 English friends a crusade against all the es-  
 tablished governments and churches in Eu-  
 rope. History will inform us that similar  
 declamations have ever been used to inflame  
 the multitude to bloodshed. It was by de-  
 claiming against *those tyrants*, the Saracens,  
 and their cruelty to poor harmless pilgrims,  
 that Peter, the hermit, stirred up all Eu-  
 rope to the *first original model of crusades*.

\* Appendix, pages 35, 36, and 37.

Struck with apprehension at the prospect of all those evils ready to spring from French rashness and French intrigue, Mr. Burke published his celebrated *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, in the autumn of 1790. As this book soon acquired great celebrity, it has been the fashion amongst a certain class of writers and orators, to attribute to it all the mischiefs which they are forced to own have followed that revolution which, as they supposed, was to have produced nothing but happiness.

That a work replete with good sense and eloquence is blemished by some enthusiasm and some indiscretion, cannot be denied: it is the characteristic manner of the singular genius who wrote it, and by which his works, if anonymous, might be distinguished amongst a thousand authors. But let it be observed that enthusiasts are generally the first to answer enthusiasts, cool sensible men are often afraid of engaging with such antagonists. The innate enthusiasm of Dr. Price, and his associates, was stronger than Mr. Burke's, only the stile of the latter being more flowery, the poetry of his

his metaphors made his enthusiasm more apparent.

If some of his assertions in favour of hereditary right are deemed too positive, let it be remembered that he was incensed by that unparalleled expression of *cashiering governors for misconduct*, and that he has renounced the doctrine of *divine indefeasible right* in other passages;\* whereas Dr. Price never explained his dangerous assertion. The expression of *swinish multitude* has been most cruelly misinterpreted, and made a by-word to incense the populace against him. But it is clear that he only speaks of a supposed particular multitude seduced into the project of “ casting learning into the mire;” for had he spoken of the common people in a general sense, *the multitude* would have been the proper grammatical expression. To prove that *a multitude* may become something very resembling a swinish beast, it is only necessary to read the speech of Gregoire, inserted at the end of Playfair’s History of Jacobinism, on the injuries

\* See page 37 of the twelfth edition.



offered to learning under the government of Roberſpierre. Indeed the beſt juſtification of Mr. Burke would be effected by the following experiment :—let three columns be arranged upon paper, of which the firſt ſhould contain the glorious predictions of all the admirers of the revolution of 1789 ; the ſecond ſhould contain Burke's predictions of miſery ; and the laſt, the confeſſions of republican writers, during the laſt twelve-month, of the crimes and miſfortunes it has really occaſioned, and the vicious ſpirit it has inſtilled into the people.

But ſuch a work would require a volume to itſelf : if any one were diſpoſed to execute the taſk, I would refer him on the French ſide to Mr. de Marnezia's work, called *Les Ruines*, to another anonymous work on Proſcriptions, Confiſcations, and Revolutions, and, to Benjamin Conſtant's Eſſay on the Strength of the preſent French Government, beſides pamphlets and ſpeeches innumerable. In the two firſt of theſe works he will find ſeverer things ſaid of *non-proprietors*, than Mr. Burke ever  
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ſaid

said of the *poor* or the *multitude*, which in Marnezia is particularly remarkable, as before the revolution he was a philanthropist, who wrote in verse and prose on the beauties of nature, and on the happiness of a country life. In Burke's volume \* I would especially refer the curious observer to his arguments on the danger of establishing a precedent of confiscation, and introducing paper money as the foundation of a new constitution. It was impossible even for Burke to describe the spirit of jobbing and gaming diffused through all ranks of people in stronger terms than it has since been painted in almost all the debates of the assembly on the subject of finance. That passage is also observable in which he hints that a new executive officer who owed his station to those leaders of party, his creators as well as masters, would fill that office better than a degraded king. This sentiment has been censured as putting despotism and death into the heads of the

\* Page 225. From page 280 to 288. Page 292, 296, 299.

king's enemies. But those who knew the secret springs of action, knew that Mirabeau intended the Duke of Orleans for the new executive magistrate, long before Burke's Reflexions appeared; and when they did appear, Condorcet and Brissot had begun to plan a complete republic. In short, the promoters of the first revolution had done too much for a monarchy, too little for a republic, and the success of the new directory in war and in government has proved Mr. Burke's conjectures not to be wrong.

If Burke was culpable in publishing his censures, Mounier, Lally-Tolendal, Mallet-du-Pan, Malouet, Neckar, who wrote numberless volumes on the errors of the first constitution, were as culpable as he, and were much more likely to affect the minds of Frenchmen than an English author. I name writers who all set out on the revolutionary side, and pass over Calonne and other royalists, because they were unpopular.

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If it was criminal for such a number \* of able writers to attack opinions adopted by the majority of the nation, what then becomes of that unlimited liberty of the press, which is sometimes held forward as a shield to cover the new champion that encountered Burke, the redoubted Thomas Paine.

I have already said, that it frequently happens in party-quarrels, that one enthusiast draws out into the contest a wilder enthusiast than himself; but in all such cases the chief blame is to be laid on that enthusiast who gave the first provocation, and sorry am I again to repeat, that it was Dr. Price. He died not long after the publication of Paine's work,—his character in private life was that of a man of religion and probity; and I wish him no other harm than to have lived to the present time, and seen the consequences of those events that made him

\* Neckar, whose style is full of similies, somewhere has written, “ Whilst the constituent assembly were praising their work, I often thought I saw the hand-writing on the wall which terrified Belshazzar—“ Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting!”



cry *Nunc Dimittis*. I will not assert that he and his associates could have prevented those consequences, by that middle course of mixed censure and praise, which I think they should have pursued (even on their own principles.) Perhaps the French would have attributed such moderation to English pride and jealousy; but yet there is a possibility that men who had some impressions of virtue in their souls, such as Fayette, Liancourt, Rochefoucault, would have been startled, and have reflected in time how far their rash career might extend. But the reverse of this caution added fuel to their devouring fire, and made the French believe there was a party in England ready to second all their views, however unjust or ambitious.

As in France, Pethion succeeded La Fayette, and Roberſpierre succeeded Pethion, ſo Horne Tooke ſucceeded Dr. Price as leader of the patriotic clubs, and had they diſturbed England with a *national convention*, Thelwall perhaps would have diſgraced and ruined Horne Tooke. The anti-constitutional views of theſe clubs be-

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came fully evident when they entered into subscriptions to diffuse throughout the kingdom, the two parts of Paine's Rights of Man, both written with the most violent animosity against the principles of our government. They dispersed them with most sedulous care amongst the unlearned, who had no opportunity to detect their numerous fallacies, and then excused themselves with the jesuitical evasion, that they did not equally approve of the whole book, but dispersed it to prevent the ill consequences of Burke's slavish doctrines. It is easy to detect such an evasion, by supposing them to disperse with the same care Paine's work against christianity, and then pretend that they mean it as an antidote against popery. Such an argument would appear ridiculous to men of all opinions, yet in the first case, party-spirit made some people affect to credit so poor an excuse.

Mr. Burke has evidently \* proved, that his doctrines, if slavish, are the profest *slavish* doctrines of those Whigs who effected

\* In his Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs.

the revolution; and the general doctrine, that every man is bound to preserve the constitution under which he was reared and protected when a child,—to amend it if he can, but not to conspire its total alteration, so far from being slavish doctrine, seems to me the safeguard of republics against tyrants, as much as of monarchs against rebels. It is the interest of all regular governments, not excepting democracies, to reprobate that dreadful opinion of Thomas Paine, the moral lawfulness of changing the government of our country whenever it is the will of a majority of the people. Expressions may be brought from great authors, such as Locke, to vindicate that doctrine,—but political contest has the power of making the wisest authors indiscreet,—and Mr. Locke was not exempted from that fatal influence. I do not believe that he ever teaches positively in what manner the sense of the people is to be ascertained, whether it is to be *weighed* by property, or *counted* by heads:—till that point is settled, *the people* becomes a nugatory term, liable to a thousand interpretations; and the histories of ancient Greece, of

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modern

modern France, and of Geneva, shew what torrents of blood may be shed before any one interpretation is decidedly fixed upon.

The single work of a single enthusiast would not have been of such high importance, but a thousand symptoms shewed that similar enthusiasts were every-where in the pay of French clubs, labouring to extend their doctrines throughout Europe, and that before many years were over, it would become evident that the Rights of Man were but a *stalking-horse* to introduce the dominion of France.—They did not venture to attack Austria or England whilst their constitution was forming, but their foreign policy during the years 1790 and 1791, may be concisely expressed by that trite proverb, “Better play at small games than stand out.” Avignon, Geneva, Switzerland, Savoy, were the objects of French intrigue and ambition, before they proclaimed their new-discovered law of nature, that the French empire must extend to the Rhine. Mallet-du-Pan, in the political part of the *Mercure de France*, (during those two years) has given ample



accounts \* of the attempts to overturn the existing governments of these countries. Mounier and Neckar join in the same complaint with regard to Switzerland.—“ Till “ French emissaries came amongst them “ (says Neckar) these little states had the “ weakness to think themselves happy.” Gibbon in his Letters and Memoirs laments the mischiefs threatened by French principles to those peaceable countries, and expresses sentiments so similar to those of Burke, that they demand great attention from the disciples of French philosophers,—since it cannot be suspected that Gibbon was prompted by a *superstitious regard for the church*.

If all the French journals could be collected and extracted, the unbounded ambition disguised under the mask of philanthropy would be very apparent indeed. Their authors began a few weeks after the 14th of July to predict, that “ the next “ century was likely to open upon an uni-

\* See for a fuller account, the Historical Sketch of the French Revolution, from page 480; to 540.

“versal democracy,” and they spared no pains, when united in clubs and societies, to accomplish their own predictions.—A few leading facts are all that can be inserted in this abstract of history.

In the summer of 1790, M. de Perigny dispersed pamphlets amongst the peasants both in the Upper Valais and in the Pais de Vaud, exciting them to insurrection; the senate of Berne arrested him, but prudently contented themselves with banishing him from Switzerland.—Other persons sent letters into Fribourg, Soleure, and other cantons, to rouse the peasants against the magistrates.

A number of malcontents formed themselves into a club at Paris, called themselves the friends of Swiss liberty, and were patronized by Mirabeau. After the insurrection of some Swiss regiments at Nancy, they sent a deputation to the assembly, and inserted into their speech some censures of the government of Switzerland. No one could object to this, after the convention had received Anacharsis Cloot's embassy from

from *all the world*, to complain of *all its governors*.

Here, I must again repeat, we see the errors of those leaders of revolutions, who take extraordinary means to work up enthusiasm for extraordinary occasions. The *facts* themselves were trifling,—the *precedents* were most important. It could not be supposed that foreign powers would bear to see the assembly of France sit like the senate of ancient Rome, listening to the grievances of every nation upon earth. We know what tyranny on one hand, and what base degradation on the other, followed the pretended philanthropy of the conquering Romans.

The old contests at Geneva, between the magistrates and the people, which had been appeased in 1789 by a reconciliation on moderate terms, were revived again in 1791 by French influence, and the right of universal suffrage was asserted. The French journalists assured their readers, that Geneva would soon follow the example of Avignon, and demand to be incorporated with the

French empire.—Lewis the Fourteenth, \* *stole Strasbourg* from the German empire; in consequence of similar domestic disputes, the republicans longed to *steal Geneva* from Switzerland, till their attention was diverted by nobler robberies.

The able journalist who conducts the *Courier du Bas-Rhin*, at a time when he was rather favourable to French principles, had said on this very occasion of Geneva, “that France would make more conquests by opinion than it had ever made by arms.” Such a compliment was not calculated to make foreign powers wish well to the French revolution.

During the quarrels of Avignon, and whilst the assembly was deliberating whether its submission could be accepted, the constitutional club of Aix published a manifesto against the assembly of Carpentras, (which refused to give itself to France) and said, “Frenchmen have solemnly sworn

\* An expression of Lord Bolingbroke, in his *Letters on History*.



“ protection and assistance without distinction of sect or country to every *man oppressed by his neighbour.*”

Is not this, crusading and knight-errantry all in one?

In May 1791, the mob of Paris insulted M. de Clermont-Tonnerre, and threatened to break open his house, because he had voted against accepting Avignon, whilst the Parisian republicans wrote to their friends in the south, “ that the people had given “ the assembly an important lesson.”

In 1791, it was generally believed in Switzerland that a conspiracy was formed to give up Geneva, Savoy, and the *Païs de Vaud* to France.\* The senate of Berne having taken some persons up, the constitutional society at Dijon wrote a most haughty threatening letter to the Bailli of Lausanne. M. Constant de Rebecque (perhaps the same who

\* Mr. Gibbon believed also in that conspiracy, and he was a disinterested observer.

writes pamphlets on the strength of the present French government,) wrote in the French journals inviting France to take the Pais de Vaud, on the same ground that it was taking Avignon, because it had long ago made part of France. It was evident that the same argument might be extended to Nice, Neuf-chatel, Flanders, Jersey, and Guernsey, all detached at various times from the ancient French empire.

During all this time there existed moderate patriots, who vainly warned the French of the dangers they ran from exciting the apprehensions of all Europe. Malouet speaking on the long contested affair of Avignon, used the following expressions :

“ This revolution has had a peculiar  
 “ character which belongs to no other, the  
 “ character of generalising its principles,  
 “ of applying them to every nation, every  
 “ country; every government. It is a real  
 “ spirit of conquest, or rather of missionary-  
 “ ship, which has seized on the most ardent  
 “ spirits,

“ spirits, and which seeks to spread itself  
 “ beyond its own limits.”

At a subsequent period, Montmorin a minister, and the friend of Neckar, thus addressed the assembly :

“ We have seen England and Holland go  
 “ safely through great revolutions, and  
 “ make other nations respect the constitu-  
 “ tions they chose to give themselves, be-  
 “ cause they respected the constitutions of  
 “ other nations. We are accused of endea-  
 “ vouring to excite every people against  
 “ their governors ;—these accusations are  
 “ unjust if applied to the French govern-  
 “ ment, or to the nation at large ; but it is  
 “ too certain that individuals, that societies  
 “ have with that aim established correspon-  
 “ dencies in neighbouring countries.”

He then went on to tell the assembly that when he sent complaints to foreign powers, he was answered by the resolutions of clubs, or the insolent paragraphs of journalists, and asked what reliance could be had

had on the friendship of a government, which had no means of punishing such atrocious libels. If such complaints were now uttered in the name of the directory, they would be heard with respect, but at that period the journalists were members of the popular societies, and those societies were the real governors of France; they prompted the legislative body, and the executive government was reduced to a mere name.

Whilst the assembly, the clubs, the journalists, and the orators, were provoking and insulting every foreign power, they were as grossly deficient in the second maxim, which we have observed that all pacific governments ought to follow,—not to invite an enemy, by the appearance of weakness and disunion. That fatal 19th of June which abolished nobility, and admitted Anacharsis's embassy, sounded the first trumpet both of foreign and civil war. Rabaud de St. Etienne, and other democrats, were probably not in the wrong when they said, that the gentry were from that instant ripe for insurrection. But before their  
enemies



enemies judge the gentry too severely, let them read history, and impartially consider whether there ever was an attempt to abolish at once old prejudices, civil or religious, which did not sooner or later end in \* bloodshed, and the weaker the oppressed party feels at home, the sooner is it tempted to call in the aid of foreign powers. Almost all the officers of the army were gentlemen, and conscious fear of the gentry's resentment, excited the leaders of the revolution to connive at those frequent mutinies of the soldiery, which gave statesmen a false idea of the weakness of the French nation. The officers had always been supposed to constitute the chief strength of its armies, and it was an old political saying, “ *La pauvre noblesse fait le soutien de la France.* ” — “ The poor gentry are the support of France. ” This maxim has proved false, but till experience belied it, we have no reason to

\* When the Spaniards conquered Grenada, philosophers as well as bigots might have held, that it would have been happier if the Mahometans could have adopted the laws of the Christians. Ximenes drove them to it by force, and we know the misfortunes that followed.

be surprised that foreign powers thought it more than probable.

The disputes occasioned by the civil constitution of the clergy were still more important, and still more calculated to impress on the minds of foreigners a belief, that great numbers of the people were ready to promote a counter-revolution.

In the spring of 1790, the assembly had enraged the clergy, by taking away all their estates, and reducing them to be pensioners upon an exhausted public treasury.

In the autumn of that year it drove them to complete despair, by regulating all the outward discipline of the church in a manner that Roman Catholics say is unlawful, without the concurrence of the clergy deliberating separately, and the consent of the Pope himself as supreme head of the church. The author of a very democratic book, *L'Histoire de la Revolution et de la Constitution Françoise*, whilst it vindicates the justice, condemns the impolicy of this measure; and says, that the assembly was turned

turned from its right path, by the influence of a committee for church affairs, over which Camus presided, and composed of lawyers, who, like their president, were full of the maxims of the long-persecuted and almost forgotten Jansenist party.\* La Harpe, in the *Mercure de France*,† confirms the same account, and says, “To our shame, it must be owned there did exist a party of Jansenists in the constituent assembly.” A melancholy truth is to be inferred from these confessions, the danger of entrusting power to men who have long been persecuted; and I fear that the behaviour of a great part of the French Calvinists during this revolution, (beginning with Rabaud and Barnave) teaches us strongly how ready the oppressed are to become oppressors.

Dumourier, in his *Memoirs*, expresses his surprize that the king was ever terrified or seduced into giving his sanction to a de-

\* The opinions of the Jansenists bore some resemblance to those of the methodists.

† See vol. v. page 331.

decree so contrary to his strict catholic principles; but as it had been previously laid down, that the king's sanction was not essentially necessary to the acts of the constituent assembly, his refusal would have been of little avail.

The assembly were not satisfied with the bare decree; they called upon all the priests to swear the observation of the civil constitution of the clergy, or to quit their benefices. On the 4th of January, 1791, the assembly called upon all the clergy who were members of its body, to take this oath instantly in their places. Almost the whole number exclaimed, that they would not take a sacrilegious oath, and resigned immediately. The pride of following this illustrious example spread through the Gallican clergy, and a majority resigned: but now arose the greatest difficulty, they insisted they had only resigned their temporal revenues or pensions, not their spiritual power, derived from the church. A violent spirit of enmity was immediately kindled, between the jurors and the non-jurors, but especially between the non-jurors and



and the *intrus*, or intruders, who were placed in their vacant benefices. The democratic author before quoted is forced to confess, with visible reluctance, that the national assembly had kindled a torch of discord which would hardly be extinguished but in torrents of human blood.\* Never has a prophecy been more completely verified!

The same author† attributes the flight of the king, in June, 1791, chiefly to the insinuations of the discontented non-juring priests, who surrounded him. So many villages in the distant provinces had refused to receive the new constitutional priests, that it was very natural for the king to suppose, that if he could escape from Paris, where he was continually insulted and endangered, he should find the rest of the nation attached alike to his person and to their old pastors. He would, perhaps, have found himself mistaken; but as he was almost immediately stopped

\* Vol. v. page 332.

† In the 6th volume. See also the 7th, chap. ii.

at Varennes, it must ever remain doubtful what his intentions really were, or what effect would have been produced, had he actually reached the fortress of Montmedi, under the protection of M. de Bouillé. The genuine republican party now began to shew themselves, and to talk of deposing and trying the king; the constitutional party, however, had still the majority in the assembly, and to secure their own power, were disposed to a reconciliation. The mob of Paris once more attempted an insurrection, but were fired at and dispersed by La Fayette and his national guards, acting under the orders of Bailly, mayor of Paris. The Jacobins were humbled for a moment; the constitutionalists separated from them, and set up a new club, under the name of the Feuillans; the constitution was revised, but the alterations were not important enough to satisfy any of its opponents; the king accepted it, because he had no other choice, and the constituent assembly dissolved itself on the 30th of September, 1791, after uniting Avignon to France, and thus setting the precedent to its successors of making those territorial

territorial acquisitions which it had once affected to disown. The Feuillant party assured all Europe that France was united, contented, and happy; the English clubs in the French interest repeated it to the English nation, whilst the Jacobins and the Orleans party were secretly preparing for new revolutions.

At that period, when the fate of the king and queen hung in uncertain suspense, the convention of Pilnitz was signed, the first open interference that foreign powers had attempted during the course of the revolution. The Prince of Condé had, indeed, collected a number of emigrants at Coblenz; the neighbouring German princes were more and more discontented, especially the ecclesiastics, who by the civil constitution of the clergy were deprived of their spiritual power over those German territories conquered by Lewis the Fourteenth; the gentry and clergy of Alsace, degraded and despoiled, were suspected of wishing for their old masters, the Germans, and did actually complain of their wrongs to the diet: the Emperor Leopold, as head of

the empire, had remonstrated against the various breaches of the treaty of Westphalia, but in his own personal character he had hitherto been silent. A report has since been spread of a treaty signed at Pavia, for the dismemberment of France in the spring of 1791, but it appears to be no more than a political lie of Brissot and his party.

In the month of July, Leopold, alarmed at the captivity of his nearest relations, and at the clubs affiliated with the Jacobins which were forming every where in Germany, negotiated a treaty of alliance with the King of Prussia, and in the month of August set his name to the following declaration:

“ The Emperor and the King of Prussia, having heard the desires and representations of Monsieur and the Count d’Artois, jointly declare, that they consider the actual situation of the King of France as an object of common interest to all the sovereigns of Europe. They hope that this interest will be acknowledged by the powers whose succour is  
“ im-



“ implored, and that in consequence,  
 “ they will not refuse to employ, jointly  
 “ with their majesties, the most efficacious  
 “ means to put the King of France in a  
 “ state to strengthen (in the most perfect  
 “ freedom) the basis of a monarchical go-  
 “ vernment, equally favourable to the  
 “ rights of sovereigns, and the well-being  
 “ of the French. Then, and in that case,  
 “ their afore said majesties are determined to  
 “ act quickly, and in common accord,  
 “ with a force adequate to obtain the  
 “ proposed end. In the mean time, they  
 “ will give their troops the necessary or-  
 “ ders that they may be ready to act.

“ 27th Aug.”

That the reader may be enabled to judge  
 whether this interference of the Emperor  
 was as culpable as republicans assert, we  
 need only go back to Mr. Fox's speech, at  
 the opening of that session which followed  
 the restoration of the Prince of Orange.  
*He then magnanimously* laid aside the con-  
 sideration of justice, and asserted, that when  
 two parties divided a state, a foreign power  
 might lawfully interfere to support the

party that was friendly, and oppose the party hostile to its interest. Such was at that time the situation of Leopold. There was all imaginable reason to believe that the violent revolutionists meant to quarrel with Austria as soon as they were in the full possession of power. The aversion diffused through all the people of France against the queen, the brutal expression of Mirabeau, that she was *an hostage*, in case of a German war, the incessant complaints of the mischief done to French affairs by the influence of Austria, the false reports that Maria Antonia had sent money to her brother, and negotiated to restore him Lorraine—these circumstances had the weight of presumptive proofs in favour of such a belief. Her life had been aimed at on the 6th of October, 1789, from the personal enmity of the Duke of Orleans; her life now seemed in danger from many united causes; and could a brother leave his sister to perish, even if her conduct had been somewhat faulty? It may be solemnly and rigorously pronounced, that the governor of a great nation should only think of the national

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interest, but the common feelings of mankind revolt against too strict an application of this maxim; and I believe a ruler has scarcely ever been respected by his subjects, allies, or neighbours, who has abandoned his family in distress. Such conduct has usually been attributed to pusillanimity, and the vulgar say—Will that man care for our wrongs, who cares not for the wrongs of his own blood? It particularly behoved Leopold to guard against the imputation of cowardice, because he had just concluded a peace with Turkey, which his subjects desired before it was made, and were afterward much inclined to censure, as dishonourable.

There is no possibility of withholding the melancholy confession, that every step taken to serve the unhappy royal family of France has, in the end, accelerated their destruction: but an impartial judge should transport himself back to the moment when the first leading step was taken; and there can be no doubt that the threatened league between Austria, Prussia, Russia, and Sweden, contributed to make the con-

stituent assembly proffer a reconciliation to the king. As soon as the constitution was finally accepted, Leopold altered his tone, and on the 22d of September,\* the gazette printed at Brussels by authority, inserted, "That a concurrence of circumstances relative to the declaration of Pilnitz, might make it be considered *comme non avenue*, i. e. as if it had never happened."

There is great reason to believe, that if France had really (according to the vaunting words of Dr. Priestly) been in a most glorious state of freedom and happiness, Leopold would never have listened to the exiled French princes. But the constitution was too ill put together to succeed. The executive power had just authority enough to delay business, but was too much hampered to be able to dispatch it. It was entrusted to a man, who in his own person, or in that of his dearest connexions, had been so cruelly and insultingly treated, that the authors of his wrongs thought he

\* See *Mercure Historique*, attaché au *Mercure de France*, Vol. de Sept et Oct. page 155.



never could forgive, and therefore were themselves implacable. He was sworn to obey a constitution he was known to dislike; and to prepare him for that oath, he was compelled to break his original coronation oath in various instances, and in none more flagrantly, than in those articles that relate to the church and its canonical privileges, which all his priests told him were violated by the civil constitution of the clergy.\* He, therefore, made a private resolution never to sanction any act which inflicted penalties on the non-juring priests, and this resolution was the immediate, at least the ostensible cause of his ruin. A wise commonwealth should be careful how they force their executive magistrate to execute laws abhorrent to his principles.† It

\* The king had also sworn at his coronation to protect the orders of knighthood, which he was now obliged to abolish.

† I will not scruple to say, that when the English Parliament refused to exclude James, Duke of York, they laid themselves under a tacit obligation to revoke the penal laws against popery. The test was a very different consideration: it was a measure of precaution, not of punishment.

is most probable that the French constitution, being as faulty as the constitution adopted by the Swedes after the death of Charles XII. would like that have ended either in despotism or democracy in some given term of years. But I shall always think the civil constitution of the clergy was the cause that this object of extravagant panegyric did *not live an year to an end*.\* This observation leads us to a still more important reflection by way of general moral:—the imprudence of suffering one single assembly to new-model a whole empire, without reserving a single power in the state that may so much as oblige them to reconsider their laws, or take time to meditate on the greater or less danger of the measures they use to enforce them.

The first and last legislative assembly of the short-lived constitutional monarchy began its sessions on the 1st of October, 1791. Its earliest actions betrayed its jea-

\* Barruel in his *Histoire du Clergé François* reports that Mirabeau said to Camus, “Your constitution of the clergy will be the ruin of our own constitution.”

lousy of the king, its hatred of non-juring  
 priests, its increasing severity against the  
 increasing emigrations of gentlemen, of  
 naval and of military officers, who left the  
 kingdom, protesting that the insolence of  
 the clubs, and the mutinies of soldiers and  
 sailors, put them in constant danger of their  
 lives, and gave them a right (as well as  
 other men) to resist their oppressors. But  
 above all, a distrust of the house of Austria  
 possessed the minds of revolutionists, which  
 might have led only to prudent precautions,  
 if the leaders of the assembly had been of  
 that moderate pacific class, which our en-  
 thusiasts fancied would take the upper hand  
 in a government founded on the principles  
 of equal representation. Instead of this,  
 the assembly permitted a party called the  
 Girondins, with Brissot at its head, to go-  
 vern their debates, and Brissot has pub-  
 licly boasted that it was his deliberate  
 purpose to kindle war. The paragraph I  
 am going to translate is taken from an ad-  
 dress of Brissot to all the republicans of  
 France on the conduct of the Jacobin so-  
 ciety, who had just expelled him. It is  
 dated on the 24th of October, in the inter-  
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val of the retreat of the Duke of Brunswic and the victories of Dumourier in Flanders.\*

“ I am accused of having provoked a  
 “ war.—And yet without the war royalty  
 “ would still subsist ! Without the  
 “ war, we should be covered with igno-  
 “ miny ! Without the war, a thousand  
 “ talents, a thousand virtues would not  
 “ have been developed ! Without this  
 “ war, Savoy, and so many other countries  
 “ whose chains are going to fall, would  
 “ not have had their liberty.—They feared  
 “ a war made by a king ; short-sighted  
 “ politicians ! It was precisely because this  
 “ perjured king was to direct the war,  
 “ because he could not direct it otherwise  
 “ than as a traitor, because this treachery  
 “ alone would lead him to his ruin ; it  
 “ was, for this very reason, necessary to  
 “ chuse a war carried on by a king.”

Along with this passage goes the following note.

\* See pages 171 and 172 of a collection of Brissot's pamphlets, reprinted in London 1794.

“ It



“ It was the abolition of royalty I had in  
 “ view in causing war to be declared (*en*  
 “ *faisant déclarer la guerre.*) Enlightened  
 “ men understood me on the 30th of De-  
 “ cember, 1791, when answering Robe-  
 “ spierre, who was always talking of  
 “ treachery to be feared, I said to him,  
 “ *I have but one fear,—’tis that we shall*  
 “ *not be betrayed.* We stand in need of  
 “ treachery, our salvation is there, for  
 “ there yet exists strong doses of poison in  
 “ the bosom of France, and there must be  
 “ strong explosions to expel it. Great  
 “ treacheries will only be fatal to the traitors;  
 “ they will be useful to the people, they  
 “ will cause to disappear all that yet op-  
 “ poses itself to the grandeur of the French  
 “ nation.” He then adds as an explana-  
 “ tory parenthesis,—“ Royalty.” The French  
 “ words run thus. “ *Elles feront disparoitre*  
 “ *ce qui s’oppose à la grandeur de la nation*  
 “ *Françoise,—(La royauté).*”

If it was possible to suppose Anacharsis  
 Cloot’s universal republic to be assembled in  
 full convention, to bring to their trial those  
*crowned ruffians* (as even English writers  
 have

have dared to call the princes of Europe) who have ventured to defend themselves against France, *they* would need no other defence, than to read in open court this vaunting confession of their bitterest enemy.

I will not weaken this passage by declamation. It should be left to the silent study of those preachers, poets, and novel-writers, who so fondly imagined, that republicans were averse to drag soldiers from their families to expire in agonies on a field of battle. I will only desire my reader to look back to what I have said on the death of Lewis XIV. His last expiring words were, "*J'ai trop aimé la guerre, ne m'imites point en cela.*—*I have been too fond of war.*—*Boy! do not imitate me!*"—Thus spake the king,—but the republican Brissot died proudly impenitent.

With the help of the key furnished by the great leader of the Girondist\* party himself, we may the better understand

\* So named from the department of the Gironde, formerly called Gascony.

those measures which at the time might appear dictated by temporary enthusiasm. Brissot began as early as the 22d of October to pour out the most violent invectives against the emigrants, and every prince who sheltered them; and every speech spoken by himself or by his partizans, rose upon each other in ferocity and insolence towards every foreign state, whatever was its constitution.

“ \* This government of Venice, which  
 “ is a mere farce—its Admiral Emo has  
 “ outraged the national flag. Geneva,  
 “ that *atom of a republic*—its disgraceful  
 “ aristocracy hates our constitution.”—

Such was Brissot's language towards republics; it may easily be imagined what it was towards kings. The circle in which Popilius inclosed the King of Egypt till he had answered the Roman demands, was a favourite metaphor with him and his friends, to represent the peremptory summons that France ought to send to all the German princes who displeased them; it

\* Merc. Politique, Vol. de Sept. et Oct. pages 318 and 323.

need not be observed how likely such a metaphor was to make France suspected of the same encroaching ambition as ancient Rome.

On the 29th of November,\* M. Isnard began to unveil their future plans for the conduct of a war, beginning indeed with professing that they meant to respect all constitutions: but that if the cabinets of kings raised a war against France, they would raise a war of the people against kings. He was ready, he said, to declare war against all Europe; he would give to the nation, “not that transient and factitious tranquillity which was but an interval between the acts of the drama of the revolution, but that solid tranquillity which can only begin when events are brought to a conclusion.”—After reading the quotation from Brissot’s pamphlet, it is easy to see that the speaker meant, France would never be tranquil till it was a republic. He proceeded to assert, “That from the moment when the ene-

\* Merc. Pol. Vol. de Nov. et Dec. page 98.



“ mies’ armies would struggle with those  
 “ of the French, the light of philosophy  
 “ would strike their eyes, nations would  
 “ embrace each other before the face of  
 “ dethroned tyrants, earth would be com-  
 “ forted, and heaven appeased.”

This *pindaric ode* was followed by a decree, rational enough in itself, but rendered odious by the wild doctrines that preceded it, and the more so, as no moderate speaker arose in the assembly to remonstrate on the danger of such hyperbolical conceits. This decree requested the king to insist that the electors of Treves, Mentz, &c. should no longer tolerate the French emigrants assembling in arms on the frontiers. By the end of December the assembly were informed that the elector had forbid these emigrants to buy arms or horses, or perform any military exercises, and the emperor had some time before, given similar orders in the Netherlands: but as they were not entirely banished from these countries, the dissatisfaction still continued at Paris, and was even increased by a rescript addressed by Leopold in his imperial

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rial capacity to the King of France,\* complaining once more of the violations of the treaty of Westphalia, and the conventions stipulated with the empire since 1648. The following paragraph may suffice as a specimen of the arguments of the dispossessed princes.

“ Therein (in these conventions) are  
 “ clearly enumerated all the domains suc-  
 “ cessively yielded to your crown by the  
 “ consent of the emperor, and other orders  
 “ of the empire. From thence it follows,  
 “ that the other possessions of the German  
 “ body not thus inscribed amongst the do-  
 “ mains, which owe allegiance to your  
 “ crown, preserve the relation they had to

\* It has been said by the friends of France, that it was ready to pay indemnities to the German princes. But the emperor always insisted that the unity of the empire demanded that no portion of its domains should be yielded without the consent of the diet. We may observe in general, how proud France has ever been of its own unity, and how ready to encourage the German princes to break off from their common center, in order to subdue them separately.

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“ the empire, and are not obliged to submit to the decrees of your kingdom.”

About this time some paragraphs appeared in foreign gazettes, renewing the comparison of the assembly's decrees with Lewis the Fourteenth's chambers of reunion, and reminding the Germans, that an alliance between Austria and Brandenburg had the effect in the last age in the first instance to check the attempts of Lewis on the independence of Germany.

Whether alarmed at these demonstrations of discontent, or flattered with the terror that had struck the Elector of Treves, the Jacobin and Girondin party united, increased in violence, and were resolved to drive all foreign princes into war, by driving them to despair. About the middle of January, 1792, M. Koch proposed a decree to request the king to demand of the emperor to engage that he would not undertake any thing against the French nation, its constitution, and its full and entire independence in the regulation of its government, and if Leopold refused an

answer in a short given time, to declare war. Brissot made one of his most violent speeches to support this motion, confessing all the while, that Leopold, whether from policy or repentance, did not seem to wish for war; but telling the assembly that he was certainly their enemy, and that every king must hate their constitution. He blamed the treaty of 1756, and mentioned the other powers of Europe, in a tone of contempt, which shewed his dependence on internal seditions.

“ Brabant,\* when free, *will unite itself*  
 “ *to France*; in Holland the Stadtholder  
 “ *is all*, and that *all is nothing*. England  
 “ can only strike France at a distance, and  
 “ the course of things will soon take away  
 “ its means of so doing; the English people *make vows for our successes which one*  
 “ *day will be their own.*”†

M. Verg-

\* Merc. Politique, Volume de Janvier et Fevrier.

† Brissot's intimate friends, Roland, Claviere, Servan, signed, without scruple, as far as appears, a very tyrannical set of instructions to the commissaries sent to Brabant in pursuance of the decree of  
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M. Vergniaud was equally full of extravagant oratory, and said that the rupture of the treaty of 1756, was as necessary to Europe as the taking of the Bastille to France. M. Fauchet, a famous bishop of the new constitutional church, told them that all treaties made with despots were null of themselves, and was for leaving off the custom of sending ambassadors to negotiate, or consuls for commercial affairs; the French, if they pleased, might trade with peaceable slaves as they traded with savages.

M. Isnard laid down a plan for carrying liberty into Belgia, and thought they had a right to fix what number of troops Leopold might keep in Flanders.

The king refused to fix a term for the emperor's answer, but sent M. de Marbois to assist M. de Noailles at Vienna, and complain of Leopold's hostile intentions.

the 15th of December, founded on those principles of French superiority, which Brissot censured four months after in his Address to his Constituents.

The dispatches of M. de Lessart, and the answer of the Prince of Kaunitz, were read to the assembly on the 28th of February. This answer was long, voluminous, and bore many suspicious marks of having been penned by some French hand: but it certainly bore no appearance of any disposition to disturb the constitution then established in France; admitting, however, Leopold's intention to defend the liberty of the King of France, and oppose the influence and violence of the republican party—"Condemned," says the letter, "by the principles of the new constitution, " proscribed by the constituent assembly, " but whose ascendant over the present legislature is seen with terror by those who " have the salvation of France sincerely at " their hearts." It accused the same party of fomenting a new scheme of revolt in Flanders,\* declaring at the same time, that Leopold would insist on the emigrants keeping quiet, and that he had ever advised

\* This accusation is rendered very probable by a remarkable letter from the club of Maubeuge to the patriots of Flanders in the preceding September.

them not to disturb the public tranquillity. The Jacobins, with Brissot at their head, were enraged at this dispatch, which they supposed had been dictated to Prince Kaunitz by M. Lessart himself, (who belonged to the Feuillant party.) They received it with fury, and on the 10th of March, M. Brissot made a thundering speech against the emperor and the ministry, and impeached Lessart upon nine or ten general articles of accusation, such as having meanly asked for peace, and tediously prolonged the negotiations. His speech was very artfully directed to excite that natural indignation which all bodies of men feel when strangers interfere with their domestic concerns, and under the veil of that sentiment to introduce hints of his intended republic, by exclaiming, " All power comes from the people ; the  
 " people have a right to change their con-  
 " stitution, and need not wait for any man's  
 " consent."\* A curious passage in his speech deserves our attention. With all the insolence of affected simplicity, he pitied

\* Merc. Politique de Fevrier et Mars, page 196.

Leopold for his blindness in not perceiving the advantages of clubs. “ He should  
 “ silently prepare the Germans for the hap-  
 “ piness of being members of clubs, and  
 “ thus strengthen his throne under the sha-  
 “ dow of our sublime revolution. To de-  
 “ stroy jacobin clubs would be to serve  
 “ tyrants, and destroy the rights of the  
 “ people.”

The man who uttered this fulsome pae-  
 negyric, was ruined in a twelvemonth by  
 the very clubs that he praised, and the first  
 step of his disciples on their return to  
 power has been to abolish them.

The impeachment of M. de Lessart was  
 voted with the few dissentient voices of some  
 members, who wished for a longer delay to  
 procure more convincing proofs of his guilt,  
 and whose opinions were received with mani-  
 fest disapprobation. The unfortunate Lessart  
 was sent off the very next day a prisoner to  
 Orleans, there to be tried by the high court  
 of justice, and fell a victim, in the begin-  
 ning of September, to the ruffians employ-  
 ed to dispatch all the obnoxious prisoners.

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He wrote to his old friend, M. Neckar, that whenever he was brought to trial, he should clearly prove that the French had forced on the war, and that all the foreign powers wished for peace. What proofs he would have given, I know not; but it is perfectly clear that the murdered can tell no tales.

All the ministry attached to the constitution were obliged to resign, the king was forced to chuse his ministers amongst his enemies, the Jacobins, and Roland, Claviere, Dumourier, were then first brought into power. The people of Paris expressed the utmost rage against Leopold; they carried an effigy representing his head stuck upon a pike under the very windows of his sister the queen; the *gentler* printsellers only endeavoured to make him contemptible, and represented him dressed as a Feuillant, under the title of Superior General of the Reverend Fathers of the Feuillant Club. In the midst of this strange disgraceful *burly-burly*, the news unexpectedly arrived that Leopold had died at Vienna on the 1st of March, after three days illness,

ness, accompanied with violent vomitings ! How many princes have been supposed to be poisoned, whose diseases were less suspicious, and in a less important crisis of affairs, Brissot had resolved on a war, and on the dissolution of the constitutional monarchy. Leopold wished to avoid a war, as long as the King of France retained the degree of power allowed by the constitution. The succession of Austria now fell to his eldest son Francis, educated amongst armies by his uncle Joseph, and reckoned more warlike than his father, who would probably be told by ambitious counsellors that he ought to revenge the insults offered to his father's sister, perhaps his father's death—at least the savage joy expressed by the people of Paris on hearing of that fatal event. It has been said the late King of France believed his father to have been poisoned by Choiseul ; it was certainly much less improbable that Leopold should be poisoned by jacobins, although I do not mean to assert that there was any solid ground for such suspicions. I must also observe, that although Leopold appears to have sincerely intended

peace with France, I do not applaud the decisive part taken in Prince Kaunitz's declaration against the republican party. A great empire like France was more likely to be incensed against monarchy when recommended to them by a foreign nation, and a nation so odious as the Austrians. But on the other hand it must be considered, that the absolute declaration demanded by Brissot, of the entire independence of France in altering her government, might have been used by him as an incentive to induce the republican party to destroy the king without any apprehension of foreign enemies. It must be considered that the speeches of the party who prevailed in the convention, all proved that their future means of defence against foreign wars, would be debauching soldiers, and stirring up insurrections; and the open threats of party amounted to this: let kings and senates submit to every wrong, every affront that France may choose to heap upon them, or they shall no longer be suffered to govern. Some lesser acts of the assembly must also be added as tending to the same end.

On the 19th of January, six refugee Dutchmen were admitted to the bar, under the auspices of M. d'Averhoult, another refugee, elected member of the assembly. They complained of the aristocracy of their own country, of the Stadtholder, of the King of Prussia, and were told by the president that they should constantly be held as the allies of the French nations. Here was the national assembly encouraging emigrants, at the very time that it was so incensed against foreign powers on less strong demonstrations of kindness to their own malcontents; emigrants from a government which was not as yet accused of suffering French gentlemen to assemble in arms, and emigrants, who for various reasons, were likely to occasion jealousy to England as well as the Stadtholder. On other days, a deputation was admitted from some emigrant Liegeois; a bookseller came to the bar and boasted that he had printed the declaration of rights of man in different languages and dispersed it in divers foreign countries. Complaints were favourably received by the assembly against the King of Sardinia, for having arrested some Frenchmen who preached insurrection



urrection to the Savoyards. In short, I must again repeat that numberless presumptive proofs were given to the world that France intended to make itself the general court of appeal for all the grievances of Europe; thus following the very plan, which in ancient times enabled Rome to destroy the independency of half mankind.\*

The new ministry of France having set out with the most blustering professions, and the temper of Francis not being deemed very pacific, men of reflection now began to think that war would not be long delayed. Leopold had evidently wished by Prince Kaunitz's letter to court the Feuillant or constitutional party, whose unpopularity were so greatly increased on that account, that they held it necessary to prove their innocence by promoting instead of retarding a war. It therefore became probable, that Francis would apply to the royalist party, and that the emigrants would at last find friends to assert their

\* Dumourier confesses he had been sent into Brabant to make observations during their first revolt.

cause. Yet so late as the 5th of April, Count Cobentzel continued to assure the French ambassador that the King of Hungary had no intention to meddle with their interior affairs, or to support the emigrants. M. de Noailles had orders to insist on the king's renouncing all armaments and all coalition with Prussia or other princes, and to keep no more troops on his Belgic frontiers than were kept on their frontiers by the French. This condition, which seems impartial at first sight, is not so in reality ; because France could overrun Flanders with national guards, before a single regiment could set out from Vienna, and come even within sight of Lisle or Valenciennes, consequently the court of Vienna had a claim to keep up the larger proportion of troops. The Austrian minister answered, that the coalition must continue till three points were arranged—The satisfaction due to the dispossessed German princes—satisfaction to the pope for the seizure of Avignon, and the adoption of the measures necessary to put the French government in possession of sufficient strength for repressing whatever could give cause of uneasiness

ness to other states—the measures were left to the choice of the French provided they were efficacious. This last article was doubtless connected with the jealousy occasioned by the principles professed at the time of the re-union of Avignon ; and it is difficult to condemn that jealousy without condemning all that Whig and Tory writers, Burnet, and Bolingbroke, and Hume, have unanimously said, in censure of the powers of Europe who neglected to check the ambition of Lewis the Fourteenth, when it first displayed itself on the death of Philip the Fourth. The clubs had already corresponded with the patriots of Flanders, had told them that Frenchmen “ embraced the whole world in their “ circle of philanthropy,” and had inveighed against the unfortunate Lessart for reprimanding them. Francis might with reason expect that an insurrection at Namur or Tournay would have the same consequences as the insurrection at Avignon, and all men of property might justly fear that it would be attended with the same massacres, especially when in the course of of the spring the jacobin party had induced the

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the assembly to pardon Jourdan and his bloody associates.

Of all the ministers whom Lewis had been compelled to admit into his councils, Dumourier was the ablest at court-intrigue, and highly confident of his own talents to conduct a war. He professes in his memoirs that he intended to preserve the constitutional monarchy, and circumstances render it not improbable. The majority of Frenchmen, he says, desired a war with Austria, some to get rid of the supposed influence of that court over the councils of Versailles, and others thinking that all parties would be united against a foreign enemy. He might therefore intend to make the king popular (but most of all himself) by the old allurements of conquest in Flanders, and he did not perceive that the new constitution of France was well fitted to raise tumults in every country, but not so well fitted to carry on a regular war. On the 18th of April he read in the king's council a violent report against the conduct of the court of Vienna; a report calculated to inflame that national hatred which had

subsisted



subsisted for ages between France and Austria, which the treaty of 1756 had smothered for a while, but not extinguished.

That treaty is reprobated in the very terms which the D'Aiguillon faction had used to vilify the Duc de Choiseul, and France is represented (without proving one single fact) as having been for years enslaved to the house of Austria. It is said, that from the very beginning of the Revolution, and prior to the accession of Leopold, Austria had sworn the destruction of the French constitution, because France would no longer be its servile instrument. Yet at that very time, the letters of the Emperor Joseph were public, which strictly charge his favourite General D'Alton to send away roughly (*renvoyer vertement*) any malcontent Frenchman who would draw him into conspiracies against the Revolution; he wrote these commands after his sister's life had been attacked, and within three months only of his own death. We see, therefore, that Dumourier did not scruple to employ calumny against the house of Austria;—and yet in this envenomed

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attack, he makes no mention of the pretended treaty of Pavia (which, if real, he must at least have suspected) nor of that declaration he has since imputed to the Austrian ministers;—that they insisted on the French constitution being regulated by the king's rejected declaration of June 1789.

The unhappy king reluctantly agreed to this report; urged (it has been supposed) by the fear that his queen would be impeached. On the 20th of April he came to the assembly accompanied by his ministers, and with evident emotion, and a trembling voice, proposed an immediate declaration of war. The assembly deliberated that very evening on this momentous question; one moderate man alone, a M. Becquey (who had also wished to defer the impeachment of Lessart) told them that the intervention of England was to be feared, since England considered the Netherlands as its own barrier, purchased by its treasures and its blood.\* Thus the assembly was warned of what has since hap-

\* Merc. Pol. Vol. de Mars et Avril. Page 249.

pened, and repaid the warning by a scornful interruption. Two or three other cautious men were not permitted to speak. M. Mailié cried out, “ You are perhaps  
 “ going to decree the liberty of the world ;  
 “ and such a war is the triumph of humanity,  
 “ not its scourge.” War was proclaimed amidst shouts of transport, and the words of the decree imported, that the French nation would be faithful to the principle of undertaking no war with a view to make conquests, but added a very extraordinary article designed to encourage perjury and desertion, and unheard-of till then amongst civilized nations.\* “ The assembly adopts  
 “ beforehand all the strangers, who, *ab-*  
 “ *juring the cause of her enemies*, shall  
 “ range themselves under her standards,  
 “ and will favour by all means their estab-  
 “ lishment in France.”

Future times will, perhaps, wonder at the indifference with which our English ministry beheld the inevitable approach of a war in Flanders, that war which had always

\* I know that generals receive deserters, but senates were not used to applaud them.

been dreaded as one of our greatest evils. It has been said in Parliament (and not denied) that the French court asked for our alliance, or at least our mediation, and our ministers have been blamed for not accepting the offer. But could those who blamed on this occasion have studied the English history, and forgot with what treacherous intentions Richelieu offered friendship to Charles I. and Lewis XIV. to Charles II.? The form of government was changed indeed, but not the temper of the ministers; Dumourier's ambition was very little inferior to that of Louvois or Richelieu. A mediation is of no real use unless both sides require it, and unless the mediator is ready to attack the party who refuses compliance with his terms. Such an armed mediation had become so unpopular with regard to Russia, that Mr. Pitt could hardly venture it again. What terms of mediation could he offer that would have satisfied either party? Could he have promised the emperor, that if he banished the emigrants from Germany, France would never interfere in the Flemish troubles? The Jacobins would have immediately exclaimed, that the people of  
Flanders



Flanders had a right to give themselves to France if they pleased.—Was he to have guaranteed the impracticable French constitution as it then existed? He must then have gone to war with the Jacobins who intended to abolish it.—Was he to have guaranteed that right of the French nation to change its constitution, so strenuously urged by Brissot? He then made himself an accomplice in the ruin and death of the king, and would still be obliged to fight the battles of the new republic. In short, every proposition from France, could only appear like a snare to allure us to assist her in the conquest of Flanders, that very error which the Whigs reproached so severely in Charles II.

Yet after making every allowance for the difficulties of the situation, I must ever think that ministers were too unconcerned at that time, and that opposition was worse, far worse than unconcerned.

The corresponding societies were spreading discontent through the nation, some of the lowest of their agents were attempting to entice the soldiery by short pamphlets

left upon ale-house tables, to demand less duty and more pay ; and one of the highest class of opposition, Mr. Gray, was framing a society of his own for the reform of Parliament, when England should have been armed and united as one man to watch over its ambitious neighbour.\*

The miserable inefficient King of France might deny that he intended conquests, but he was not the master. If a province of Flanders was subdued, the example of Avignon dictated the following *natural* progress. Gain some votes for an union by fear or money,—threaten the life of any member who should speak against it (as had been the case with Clermont Tonnerre) let the assembly vote that a voluntary submission differs from conquest, and the king would probably not hazard his life and throne to refuse the addition of a province to his nominal government.

\* It has been long a plausible argument, that with an equal representation we should have had fewer wars ; but that argument lost its strength at the moment when the national assembly voted a war with such precipitation.

Two causes may have contributed to the apathy which then prevailed in England. One was the strong apprehensions entertained in the preceding years by some politicians of the eventual dangers to Europe from the power of Russia, which, perhaps, made them too insensible to the dangers arising from the intrigues of France. The other, and stronger cause, was a prevailing notion of the superiority of German discipline over the then undisciplined French troops. But the institution of national guards was forgot, an institution calculated to teach every Frenchman the use of arms, and they were not like our militia, forbidden to go beyond the frontiers.

The first events of the war were calculated, however, to increase the general contempt for French troops. They were shamefully repulsed on the 28th of April, in their first attempt to enter Flanders, and completed their disgrace by the barbarous murder of General Dillon. M. de Graves, the war-minister, excused to the assembly the rashness of this attempt, on the hopes that had been founded on some local and

individual connections in Brabant. But it seems the Brabançons, though continually thwarting their sovereign, were not at that moment ripe for insurrection. A pause of several weeks ensued in the war, which no one except Dumourier was perhaps very eager to carry on strenuously. The king did not approve it, and as to the Jacobins, we may see by Brissot's own confession, "that their greatest fear was *not to be betrayed*;" that is to say, they feared lest victory should have rendered the king popular.

In the month of June, indeed, Marshal Luckner succeeded in taking Menin and Courtray; but the troops kept in a perpetual ferment by emissaries from the clubs, disheartened by constant suspicion of their king and their generals, were not then in a situation to retain their conquests. They were soon obliged to evacuate Flanders, and the people of Paris grew more and more inflamed with jealousy against the king and queen. That jealousy had never been appeased from the very first existence of the constitution, nor had real tranquillity



lity ever reigned either at Paris or the provinces, especially in the south of France. The dreadful revolt of the negroes of St. Domingo, and the bloody massacres of Avignon, were amongst the first tidings that greeted the new assembly. A civil war between the royalist town of Arles and the republican Marseilles; a riot at Aix, which ended in disarming and dismissing the Swiss regiment of Ernst;\* innumerable quarrels, attended with murders, between the constitutional and the non-juring churches, plainly shewed the misery of France, however disguised under specious names. There was no longer any commander in Paris who had the same power over the national guards as La Fayette; the constituent assembly, jealous lest a perpetual general of the Parisians should prove another Cromwell, had decreed that the commanders should be changed every month. La Fayette, who had stood for the office of mayor of Paris, and

\* See *Histoire de la Persecution du Clergé de France*, par M. Barruel. The work is written with all the Catholic prejudices, but full of curious facts and details.—Printed for J. Debrett.

then retired into the country, on the first alarm of war obtained the command of one of the armies. But the department of Paris was chiefly composed of Feuillans, with the Duke de Rochefoucault at their head, who passed for belonging to one of the *hundred* French parties, called *the impartial*s, who went a *little*, though but a *very little*, farther than the *true constitutionalists*, in their attachment to regal power. The Jacobins, therefore, were not entirely at their ease in Paris, and once more courted the Duke of Orleans, and obtained money from him to counterbalance the fire-arms of the national guards, by arming the mob of Paris with pikes, which by a true French quibble were called after his name, *les Philip-piques*; and the rabble were exercised in some popular tumults of which the dearness of various commodities (especially sugar) was either the cause or the pretence. The most horrid libels were dispersed against the queen, who was described to the people, as uniting the incontinence of a Sappho and a Messalina with the cruelty of a Nero. *Madame Veto* was one of the names given

to her, alluding to the royal suspensive veto, by which the king had stopt some acts relative to emigrants and priests, and a famous *patriotic* song began with

Madame Veto avoit promis  
De faire égorger tout Paris.

But when her enemies intended to make her completely odious, there wanted no other epithet than that of *L'Autrichienne*, the Austrian woman!—and the people were as ready to detest her for her birth as for any of her supposed vices. The ill-success of the campaign was attributed to her, and she and Montmorin, and some others, were denounced to the assembly as holding a private council at the Thuilleries, which was called the Austrian committee.\* It is probable that this interval of May and June was filled up with many private intrigues, but that the intrigues of the court were much less culpable than their

\* I cannot help recommending the tragical event of the alliance between Austria and France to the consideration of *those* who would have recommended an alliance equally unnatural between France and England, enemies

enemies imagined. Mallet-du-Pan, the author of the *Mercure Politique*, is an author I have often followed, because his predictions of the evils likely to arise from the errors of all parties, have been so strangely verified as to deserve the name of prophecies.\* He has declared in a late pamphlet, that the king was utterly averse to any foreign power interfering with the French internal government, and had charged him in the month of May, with a secret commission to Francfort, to request the combined powers “not to let the character  
“ of this war differ from the usual character  
“ of wars carried on between independent powers.”

But it was the French nation itself who first contributed to make the war lose that *usual* character; by the inflammatory speeches of those members who guided the assembly, by the encouragement to desertion, held out in the very proclamation of war, and by the protection given to a band of emigrant Brabançons and Liegeois, who

\* Correspondence de Mallet-du-Pan.



published, just at the opening of the campaign, a manifesto, not from the stadthouses of Antwerp, or of Liege, but from the town of Paris, in which all conventions were declared null and void which the representatives of Brabant had concluded with Leopold, which disowned every power of every sort then existing in their native countries, and declared their intentions to establish an entire new form of government. This state paper was little attended to, because the immediate defeat of the French, on the 28th of April, rendered it of no effect; but it remains a strong proof on record, that the French were carrying on the war, in the spirit of a crusade against aristocracy, and therefore had little right to blame those powers, who attempted in their turn a crusade against democracy.

The nominal king of France had no means to repress this dangerous spirit, and the Jacobins were daily attempting to limit the power of the court within still narrower bounds.

Two decrees were hastily carried through the assembly, one that authorised the departments to transport any non-juring priests whom a given number of patriots should attest to be dangerous men; the other to summon a new army of twenty thousand men from the provinces to guard Paris, the real object of this measure was generally supposed to be, to collect a force to be employed for the purpose of dethroning the king. The first was evidently contrary to that article of the declaration of rights, which says, “The law shall be the same to all men, whether it protects or punishes.” The second infringed on the executive power of the chief magistrate, even if it had not concealed a deeper design. The king resolved to refuse his sanction; to dismiss Roland, Claviere, and all his jacobin ministers, except Dumourier, who in his *Memoires*, declares himself provoked at the insulting manner in which his colleagues behaved daily to the king,\* convinced of their evil intentions against monarchy, and determined

\* *Ils le tuoient a coups d'epingles*, is Dumourier's expressive French Idiom.

to support the king ; that is, to be a powerful first minister, if the king would take away their pretences from his opponents, by sanctioning the obnoxious bills. He promised so to model the camp, that it should not become dangerous ; and the king agreed to sanction it ; but the bill against the priests was, in his mind, impiety !\* Dumourier urged him to save himself, his wife, and children : he was irresolute for a few days, but at last positively refused, with these decisive words : “ I expect to be slain, and “ forgive beforehand my murderers.”

Dumourier, thus thwarted in his plans, resigned soon after his colleagues, and saved himself from the resentment of the Jacobins, by leaving the king to his fate, and setting off to command one of the frontier armies. The gathering storm soon broke upon the king, and on the 20th of June the mob forcibly entered his palace to compel him to sanction the two bills. He steadily refused, and behaved through the whole tedious and terrifying day, with a

\* See Dumourier's last Memoires, and the second vol. page 347.

calmness and passive fortitude, which raised his character in the eyes of his subjects, and for some few weeks he appeared to have rather gained ground on his enemies. The department of Paris suspended Pethion, the Jacobin mayor of Paris, for conniving at this tumult; La Fayette came from his army to complain of this insult against the king, but the inefficacy of his complaints only served to shew that his power and influence were vanished. Addresses of abhorrence, which came up from the different departments, struck more terror into the Jacobins, and they were convinced, that themselves or the king must perish.

It is grievous for a friend of the common cause of Europe to be obliged to own, that the king's ruin was hurried on by the indiscreet manifesto which was soon after published in the name of the Duke of Brunswick, whose pompous menaces bear the marks of having been dictated by some Frenchman, but whose real author and real history is not yet known to the world. No one can justify it entirely, but yet it does not deserve all the odious epithets which



which have been lavished on it. This manifesto renounces all thoughts of making conquests in France, or of giving any particular form of government to that country; but it denies that the king is free, and declares that the German troops enter France to restore his freedom. Its chief faults are, demanding that the king should chuse a residence, where he was to be guarded by foreign troops, not sufficiently declaring, that the war was grounded on the attempts of the French to change the government of all other countries, and using threats against the city of Paris for insulting or detaining the king.

The Parisians had, on the 20th of June, sufficiently permitted the king to be insulted, and therefore were already liable to the menaces of the proclamation. Yet still the burghers were unwilling to depose the king; and Brissot himself owns, in the before-mentioned address to the republicans, that the extravagance of the Jacobin club of Paris had given that party the name of *enragés*, or madmen; and alarmed men of property at

the idea of a total change of government. A formidable gang of banditti was therefore sent for from Marseilles, the money of the Duke of Orleans hired the same ruffians that had attacked Versailles in 1789, and the 10th of August was pitched upon to complete what the 14th of July and the 5th of October had begun; perhaps had rendered inevitable.

It is unnecessary now to collect arguments by way of proof, that a premeditated attack was made by the Girondin party upon the king's palace. Their own publications, after they split into different factions, prove it sufficiently, and the only plausible reasons they bring are, the king's insincerity, and their own danger. After the insult of the 20th of June, their danger might be real; but they had brought it on themselves. The king's insincerity is a point asserted rather than proved; but supposing it real, one question still remains to be repeated: what sincerity could be expected from a chief magistrate, who was refused liberty of conscience to practise that religion which he held to be the only  
true

true faith? If it be observed, that so rigorous a devotion to the pope is incompatible with the duties of a governor, I answer, that we have now touched upon the very point at issue between the friends of the church of England, and the enemies of all church establishments whatsoever, who deny that there is any connection between a man's religious, and his political opinions.

To speak impartially,\* I am inclined to think, that the king never intended to restore absolute monarchy; but that he hoped all the departments, convinced of the dangerous weakness of the executive government, would join to petition for another revision of the constitution, and, in particular, for a repeal of that part which related to the clergy, and which Camus had by those manœuvres so easily to be practised with a single house of Parliament, hurried the constituent assembly into placing on the same *consecrated* line with the articles that were

\* Dumourier, in the second vol. of his *Memoires*, doubts the queen's sincerity more than the king's; but is that wonderful, after the daily ill-treatment which Dumourier himself describes?

purely civil. Not one of all the articles could be abrogated, till after three assemblies had voted for their repeal; and yet no sooner was the constitution put in action, than almost every party wished to alter it. The majority of proprietors at least desired to preserve monarchy; but no twenty politicians could agree together on what sort of monarchy was most desirable. One side wanted to diminish, another to increase the king's prerogative; some men would have no veto, others wished for the veto of a second council; and some of the early Constitutionalists, nay even La Fayette himself, were accused of this desertion of their former principles. The majority being thus incapable of acting together, the republican minority soon gained the ascendancy, and the true unmixed Constitutionalists were left in the middle of all these factions, vociferating, "The constitution—nothing but the constitution—the whole of the constitution;" unheeded and unregarded, the weakest party in the nation. Does not one striking truth result from these reflections? the rashness of those men who set up the early leaders of the French revolution,



tion, as the models of all public virtue and public wisdom.

On the other hand, candour requires this remark, that it is most probable the Girondins did not originally intend the king's death, but rather hoped to drive him, by repeated insults, to forego his right of a suspensive veto, and then by tormenting his conscience with the execution of laws, which he thought impious,\* to induce him, perhaps, to a voluntary abdication; but when they despaired to execute these projects, there were no measures too wild or too desperate for their imagination. After all their exclamations against dismembering the French empire, they confess, that had their insurrections at Paris failed, they would themselves have dismembered it, by retiring to Aix and Marseilles, and setting up a republic in the southern provinces. Mad. de Roland† tells us a more marvellous story still, of

\* If the laws against priests had failed, there was another law in agitation, to permit divorce, which passed as soon as the king was deposed.

\* See Appel à la Postérité, par Mad. de Roland, p. 155. The most curious circumstance is, her sincere

of a wish expressed, that one of their associates should be murdered, to throw the odium upon the court; and of a glorious enthusiast, who declared himself ready to be shot the ensuing night, by his friends, for so salutary a purpose. If fiends were mortal, such a proposal as this might be expected in the debates of pandemonium.

M. Garat, in his justification of his conduct, asserts, that when admitted to these private councils, he repeatedly told his friends, that the only dignified and regular proceeding was, for the assembly to declare, that they suspected the king of treachery, to order his palace to be surrounded, and seize his papers. Garat has been insulted ever since by the Brissotins, as if he had justified the massacre of September; but I can only perceive his decided opinion, that the manner in which the Brissotins brought on the 10th of August, led inevitably to the fatal consequences of the 2d of September.

unmixed admiration of this enthusiast, M. de Grangeneuve, who would sacrifice his life, to give a sanction to calumny.

The

The assembly was not prepared to depose the king: Brissot himself confesses, that votes had been privately counted, and his party found they should be left in a minority; they had failed of carrying the impeachment of La Fayette: Collot d'Herbois and Chenier put themselves at the head of the rabble, to demand the king's deposition. Pethion, speaking in the name of the sections of Paris, demanded, in milder words, the suspension of the king's regal power: these demands were only referred to a committee.—After such steps as these, the republicans had no alternative, but success or death. It had been solemnly proclaimed, that the country was in danger, and in consequence the common council at the Hotel de Ville, and the councils of the sections or wards, had been ordered to be permanent, which gave them a legal power of acting at any hour of the day or night. At midnight, between the 9th and 10th of August, when the citizens of character and property were either gone home to their repose, or serving on their posts as national guards, a number of the most desperate Jacobins took possession of the

council room of each section, recalled their former deputies, and sent deputies as ferocious as themselves to form a new common council. They sent for Mandat, the commander of the national guards, stationed in the palace, pretended to commit him to prison, but had an assassin ready to shoot him dead, as their attendants were leading him down stairs.\* Being now confident that the national guards, wavering in their sentiments and divided, would make little opposition, the Marseillois and the Parisian mob set out to attack the palace. The king, persuaded by M. Roederer, took shelter, with his queen and children in the national assembly, but as he had not left orders sufficiently positive for the Swiss to abandon their posts, they made a spirited but imprudent resistance, and in consequence were almost all massacred. Their dead bodies were mangled with savage cruelty, the palace was plundered, and some of the king's servants murdered. Many other royalists and constitutionalists perished on that terrible day,

\* Just in this manner was Flesselles murdered on the 14th of July, 1789.



amongst whom, Clermont Tonnerre deserves to be particularly noticed. He was one of the few considerable persons of the party named Monarchists, who still resided in France. Their principles of government were—royalty and two houses of Parliament; they had distinguished themselves, with Mounier, Lally, Clermont, at their head, in the beginning of the revolution, and had been hated and proscribed ever since.

During all the terrifying progress of this insurrection, the assembly were continually receiving the most violent addresses from the sections of Paris, and hesitating no longer on their conduct, passed one decree to suspend the king's power, and another to dissolve themselves as soon as a new convention could be chosen to deliberate on a total change of government.\*

\* About this time, it was finally decided that feudal rights and duties should be abolished without *any indemnification*. This was done to please the poor farmers, who, when the jacobin principle of requisition

On Saturday, the 11th of August, it was further decreed, that no qualification whatever should be required of the voters for this convention, except that of not being a domestic servant. This was enacted, to flatter the poor; and, to take care of *themselves*, they passed another decree, that the people might, if they pleased, re-elect them for the new assembly.

The unhappy royal family remained, for near three days, shut up, first in the hall of the assembly, and next in the president's chamber; at the end of that time, they were sent to the Luxemburg, but as that was thought too regal-like a prison, they were soon removed to an old tower, called the Temple, and surrendered into the unfeeling hands of their most deadly foes, the municipality of Paris.

La Fayette, previous to this catastrophe, had frequently invited the king to escape  
 tion was introduced, soon found reason to regret that they had ever applauded these invasions of the rights of property.

from

from Paris, and the king's friends say those offers had been constantly refused.\* He was dismayed to the last degree, at hearing of this revolution, and endeavoured to excite his army to oppose it; whilst Dumourier gained the favour of the convention, by inducing his army to submit to it directly.

Fayette's attempts proved vain; he was reduced to save himself by ignominious flight, and, with a few of his staff officers, unhappily fell into the hands of the Austrians, who have ever since kept him in close confinement. Unless more particulars were published of the provocations he had given to the Austrians, I must censure his detention, as it tended to make the Constitutionals believe that the emigrants were irreconcilable, and intended, if they returned to France, to have them tried by the restored Parliaments, and executed as traitors. Few situations, indeed, could be more distressful than that of the

\* The same offers were made by the Duc de Li-  
ancourt at Rouen.

unhappy leaders of the first revolution,—equally hated by all parties, they saw nothing but ruin and death on every side. The well-meaning, but imprudent Duc de Rochefoucault, was murdered by the Marseillois, the Duc de Liancourt fled into England, Barnave was persecuted for a long time, driven from place to place, and at last seized and executed. Thus he expiated by his own blood that cruel answer he had made to Lally when exclaiming against the murders of Berthier and Foulon, “Was those men’s blood so pure?”

It ought to be remembered that Mallet-du-Pan, in his *Mercure Politique*, constantly foretold the downfall of this party, and the triumph of the Jacobins; but he, as well as Mr. Burke, unfortunately experienced the fate of Cassandra. The first error of this party was confounding *equality* of rank with *equal liberty* and *equal law*, and teaching the people of France that the two last were of no consequence, unless they obtained the first, though at the expence of every crime. Their last and most irreparable error was joining with the Jacobins in  
pro-



promoting the war with Austria, and not foreseeing that its consequences would fall heavy, not only on the royal family, but on all who still wished for a nominal monarchy.

The triumphant Jacobins experienced, however, as little tranquillity in their moments of glory, as their predecessors, the Constitutionalists, and were as easily split into different parties. The municipality formed for a temporary purpose on the night before the 10th of August, and composed of the most violent blood-thirsty men of the party, soon discovered their intention to overpower the assembly, and the ministry, Roland, Claviere, Servan, Monge, whom the assembly had instantly restored to their places. Danton, the minister of justice, (more properly of cruelty) sided with the Parisian common council; the infamous Marat, and the tyrannical Robespierre took the same party, in opposition to Brissot, who with all the Girondins, was in close alliance with the ministry.

The horrid massacres of the 2d and 3d of September are too well known to need a particular

particular description, and happily arguments are no longer wanted to make them abhorred. For many long years to come every woman will tremble at relating the shocking fate of the Princess de Lamballe; and every philosopher, I could almost say every protestant, will blush with surprize, when in the massacre at the Carmes they read of the horrors St. Barthelemi revived by scepticism against popery.\*

Each of the two parties have since endeavoured to throw the odium on each other, but the guilt of both is but too apparent. The murders were contrived by Danton, Roberespierre, Marat, and connived at by Brissot and Roland, whilst only priests, officers, and ladies were the victims; but at the last they suspected that their colleague Danton was joining in a plot against them-

\* The Archbishop of Arles, and the other priests at the Carmes, were not prisoners waiting for a trial, they had voluntarily surrendered under promise of being conducted to the frontiers, and left to profess their religion freely in foreign parts; consequently their fate bears some resemblance to that of the Hugonots, who were deceived by a public treaty.

selves in order to have them arrested by the municipality, killed as suspected persons, and if any account was demanded of their deaths, the blame might have been easily laid upon error. From this time the hatred between the two contending parties grew inveterate; but yet did not prevent them from joining in the most strenuous efforts, first to defend their own country, and then to make all foreign powers submit to their ambition. Even at the very time when the combined armies were entering France, the assembly gave orders to General Montesquiou to attack Savoy. The King of Sardinia, though his sons-in-law were exiled, and his relation the Princess de Lamballe murdered, had not yet broken his neutrality, but the French supposed he was deliberating whether he should break it, and completely adopted the maxim of conquerors and despots, of Lewis the Fourteenth and Frederic of Prussia—let suspicion stand for proof and always strike the first blow. To weaken the house of Savoy had been more than once the policy of former French kings; these republicans, after abolishing their power, adopted their maxims towards

foreigners,

foreigners, and carried them into execution with more success than Henry or Lewis had ever experienced. Savoy was subdued with so much ease, that it affords great confirmation to those imputations of Mallet-du-Pan, that a plot had been formed the preceding year to betray it into the hands of France, at the very time when the vote against conquest was a favourite theme of applause with *purblind* philosophers. At first the French pretended that Savoy should be constituted into a republic, but it was soon discovered that this republic was too feeble to support itself, a re-union was demanded and willingly granted; the orators who spoke to the convention in its favour, carefully observed how much profit the French republic would acquire from the estates of the church and the emigrants, and thus more and more laid open the real views of France in offering its fraternity to all nations. Nice, on the side of Provence, was soon after subdued, in the same manner and for the same purposes of re-union. Montesquiou was afterwards ordered by the revengeful Claviere\* to at-

\* Claviere was a Geneva emigrant.



tack Geneva, which at that time was saved by admitting a garrison of Swiss troops, whom the French were not prepared to attack. Montesquiou drew off, and made a convention with Geneva, so odious to the wild democrats, that the assembly was persuaded to impeach him, and he just learnt the news in time to save himself by flight. The French party in Geneva recovered their spirits on the Swiss withdrawing their garrison, turned out the magistrates, called a convention to frame a new constitution, the fatal consequences of which have been the murder or impoverishment of the most virtuous citizens of Geneva. Dumourier\* in his *Memoires* says, positively, that it was determined at Paris to invade and overturn all the Swiss aristocracies, and that they were saved chiefly by the spirit of his friend Major Weiss, envoy from Berne, who threatened the ministry with the discovery of secrets (of what nature is unexplained) that might have endangered their safety.

\* In his first *Memoires*, published in 1794, p. 110.

At the beginning of this violent career, the combined army had entered France, taken Longwy and Verdun, besieged Thionville, whilst the Duke Albert of Saxony on the side of Flanders had bombarded Lisle. All Europe was in suspense, and most politicians expected a speedy end of the new French government. Why this great expedition proved so entirely abortive, is a problem that no one has solved as yet in a satisfactory manner. It has been said that the Duke of Brunswick was discontented with the Austrians who had not sent the number of troops they had promised; that he was cautiously averse to penetrate far into the French territories, unless some strong fortresses had been previously taken; and that the King of Prussia, as well as the emperor, were deceived by the emigrants, who assured them that the French were so discontented with their new government, and especially with their new priests, that they would join the allies by thousands.\* The emigrants seem to have been

\* It is not wonderful they should have trusted to that discontent, since even now, M. Portalis has lately stated

been fatally consulted in drawing up the manifesto, and arresting La Fayette, and yet never to have been consulted in the military details of the expedition. Their writers say, that the Duke of Brunswic, after reducing Longwy and Verdun, should have seized a post called Les Islettes, and proceeded from thence in a direct road westward to Chalons, instead of turning a little to the north, and taking a circuitous course by Grandpre, through a country known in France by the *Sobriquet* of *La Champagne Pouilleuse*, which is either barren in the extreme, or fruitful only in grapes, which gave the German soldiers the dysentery. This fatal camp disorder was much increased by incessant rains, which made the roads almost impracticable and retarded their supplies of bread, forage, and ammunition.

Dumourier possessed at that time the confidence of the convention; the clubs were too sensible of the common danger to

stated to the council of elders that the majority in France is partial to the non-juring priests.

employ their usual emissaries to disorganize the army, consequently Dumourier was able to gain the affections of his ill-disciplined troops, and with an inferior army stopped the Duke of Brunswic, and defended the road to Chalons. Some negociations were carried on between the respective generals which were never thoroughly understood, but which were entirely put an end to, when the news was brought that the convention had met for the first time on the 20th of September, and had voted by acclamation, that France was a republic. Whether fear or interest swayed with the King of Prussia, whether the Duke of Brunswic was convinced that they could not advance a step farther without imminent danger, all schemes of attacking the French army was given up, and in the beginning of October, the disappointed king and his generals fell back towards Verdun, with a sickly and discontented army. The French soon obliged them to evacuate their country entirely, and the allies separated—Prussians, Austrians, and emigrants, equally enraged at each other. But above all, the emigrants were loudest

in



in their complaints, accusing the German princes and noblemen, and above all, the Duke of Brunswic, of being very lukewarm in their cause. Many similar lamentations may be found in Peltier's *Tableau de Paris*, where the emigrants say that the German noblemen were not displeased with the misfortunes of those whose ancestors had often terrified Germany, and that the Duke of Brunswic was attached to the *Illuminés*,\* admired Neckar, and pitied La Fayette. If this system be true, it proves, that this pretended *crusade* of kings was a measure forced on the Germans by the French, who drove them by their ambitious schemes into protecting those emigrants whom they naturally did not love.

These schemes of conquest now blazed forth in all the dazzling splendor of success. Custine took Spire and Mentz, and penetrated to Frankfort, which roused the King of Prussia into once more employing his troops, and forced the slow diet of

\* A fanatic sect, suspected of corresponding with the Jacobins.

Ratibon to proclaim that this war was a general war of the empire.

Dumourier entered Flanders, won the battle of Jemappe on the 7th of November, and completed the conquest of the Netherlands and of Liege in one month, thus surpassing in rapidity, at least, all the exploits of Condé and Turenne.

The French were now transported even beyond the bounds of French gasconade, and threw down the gauntlet to all Europe in their famous decree of the 19th of November. As some writers have wished to explain away the hostile intentions of that decree, it is proper to copy from translations of the French journals, accounts of some of the steps which preceded and accompanied it.

On the 11th of November, only two days after the news of the battle of Jemappe reached Paris, Narketon, a Dutchman, being admitted to the bar, spoke as follows,  
 “ My countrymen, the Batavians, burn  
 “ with a desire to become Frenchmen, and  
 “ the

“ the Stadtholder trembles. They expect  
 “ liberty from you. French generals come  
 “ and break the chains of these unhappy  
 “ republicans, still oppressed by tyrants.”  
 —Applauses.—Honourable mention made  
 of this speech by order of the convention.

The Duke of Deux-ponts had wished to separate his cause from the rest of Germany, had acknowledged the French republic, and fondly hoped for safety. But his country lay as convenient for the French as that of Avignon, and till it was conquered, they could not accomplish their now-avowed intention of making the Rhine the limit of the French empire. This project had often been imputed to Richelieu and Lewis the Fourteenth, whose ambition, arrogance, and unfairness have been as exactly copied as if they had left their political testaments for legacies to this new republic. A quarrel was therefore to be contrived with this unfortunate petty prince, and under this palpable pretext, a general vote of immense importance was to be introduced—a manœuvre commonly used through the whole of this revolution.

The following scene as described in their own newspapers was exhibited on November the 19th. M. Rhul observed, that the bailliage of Darmstadt, belonging to the Duke of Deux-ponts, but which by the treaty of Ryswick should have belonged to France, had displayed the three coloured cockade, planted the tree of liberty, and that the duke was marching his troops to carry off and imprison the syndics.—Rhul proceeded to move, that the assembly should declare “Those people who wish to fraternize with us, are under the protection of the French republic.”

Brissot observed, that this principle was already adopted and recognized in their proclamations, which stated that they would assist all those who wished to shake off the yoke of their tyrants, but he wished on the whole, to refer the drawing up of the expected decree to the diplomatic committee.

The assembly, still more precipitate than Brissot, passed the following celebrated decree before they quitted the hall.

“The



“ The national convention declares in  
 “ the name of the French nation, that it will  
 “ grant fraternity and assistance to *every peo-*  
 “ *ple* that wish to recover their liberty; and it  
 “ commissions the executive power to give  
 “ the necessary orders to its generals to assist  
 “ all such people, and to defend those citi-  
 “ zens who for the cause of liberty may  
 “ have been or are oppressed.”

The immediate consequences of this decree were fatal to the poor Duke of Deux-ponts, who was obliged in a few days to escape precipitately from his palace at midnight, and take shelter beyond the Rhine, whilst his country was over-run by French troops. About the same time the executive council published a decree to open the navigation of the Scheld, setting up (as they had done in the case of the German estates in Alsace) the *rights of nature* against the positive letter of the treaty of Westphalia. It is remarkable how much this very measure was reprobated by Mirabeau, who in his pamphlet against the Emperor Joseph, declares that the Dutch could not preserve their independency, if the branches  
 that

that form the mouth of the Scheld might be navigated at pleasure by foreign vessels. But it was not only the injurious measure itself that should be considered, it must be combined with all the other votes and decrees, it must be combined with the unpopularity of the king's pacific conduct in 1787, and the general national opinion, that the honor of France was engaged in ruining the house of Nassau. In that light, it looks very much like an experiment to try what insults the Stadtholder would bear with patience, and resembles the offers of peace which the tyrannical republic of Rome made to her rival Carthage previous to the third Punic war. Disband your troops, said the Roman senate—They are disbanded, answered the humble Carthaginians.—Give up your elephants—They are at your mercy.—Give us your treasures.—They are ready for your commissioners.—When the Carthaginian timidity was now sufficiently proved,—the final sentence of extermination followed. Give up your city, and go settle in any part of the world where the Romans may please to tolerate your existence.—The despair of the Car-

3

thaginians,

thaginians, and its dreadful consequences, are well known in history. Similar to this was the peace which France then held out to all the nations in Europe, combined with the hypocrisy of pretending friendship to the poorer classes, and thus employing one part of every nation to subdue the other. The admission of the Dutchman on the 11th of November, and of the complaints from the bailliage of Darmstadt on the 19th, arose from the same principle, and the vindication of the decree that followed, attempted afterwards by Le Brun, that it only referred to those nations who unanimously asserted their freedom, was proved to be false by the very first application that was made of the decree. The Duke of Deux-ponts was driven from his whole territory because a single bailliage declared against him; and that the Stadtholder was not immediately expelled because a deputation of Dutch patriots called him a tyrant, solely depended on the dread that was yet entertained of the resentment of England.

The situation of this country became every day more perplexing. To suffer

France

France to ruin the house of Austria, and possess themselves of Belgium, had hitherto been reckoned an unpardonable crime in every English king or minister who had connived at it. Security from invasion on the side of Holland and Flanders was our only return for all our debt and taxes; to weaken that security was to blast every laurel obtained in former wars; and if the present state of finances made our connivance in the seizure of Flanders unavoidable, it was the greatest sacrifice ever made to peace and economy; but tamely to sacrifice Holland and East India also, was not forbearance, it was infamy!

The flimsy pretence of the French, that they invaded all countries to restore the inhabitants to the right of chusing their own government, had been sufficiently disproved by the forced re-unions of Nice and Savoy, and it was known that similar measures were preparing in Flanders. These re-unions were accompanied with a severity unheard-of amongst modern conquerors. For more than a hundred years it has been common to allow those conquered inhabi-

tants



tants who cannot reconcile themselves to the new government, permission to quit the country and sell their estates within a limited time; but now that conquest is carried on in virtue of *the rights of men*; whoever cannot subscribe every tittle of the new political creed is declared an emigrant, and his estates confiscated to the profit of the conquering country.

The ground work of this rigour is to be traced to the foundation of the French revolution, having been laid upon the national right of confiscation; and after all the invectives uttered against Mr. Burke for his superstitious attachment to the church, all that he has written upon the dangerous precedent of confiscating church lands has proved well founded. It was fondly believed that the French church lands were equivalent to the deficit in the French finances, and encouraged by that hope, no more economy was really observed under the new constitution than under the monarchy; their hopes proved vain, and the gulph of the *deficit* still yawned before them, The next scheme not openly avowed, but

but apparent in the actions of the three national assemblies, was to drive the lay emigrants into rebellion, and thus have a pretence to seize their estates. They succeeded but too well, by dint of inhuman treatment, but at the same time they drew upon themselves an expensive foreign war. The only expedient then contrived by their financier Cambon, to fill up the yawning gulph, was to conquer on all sides, and seize the church lands and the property of malcontents in all the conquered countries. This scheme first appeared darkly in the violent threats of Dumourier's proclamations against such Belgians as retained any affection for their old government—Proclamations which have escaped the censure of those men whose humanity was so hurt by one rash manifesto against France, which, perhaps, was never intended to be put in practice. It was then farther developed by the decree of the 15th of December, on the manner in which generals should secure the *national* property of invaded countries; it gave rise to a thousand depredations in Flanders, and was lastly confessed and warmly reprobated

reprobated by Dumourier and Brissot\* when they got in disgrace with the ruling party.

But had England been united, France might have been afraid to execute this project in countries whose independence was connected with our safety, the Dutch government might have slumbered on as usual, and Belgia have become an independent republic. But the correspondencies carried on in this country from the beginning of the revolution, flattered the French with hopes that our ministry would be so entangled with powerful factions and intestine commotions in Great Britain and Ireland, as to have no leisure to inquire into foreign affairs.

The situation of the French government resembled that of Richelieu in 1638, and they were equally afraid with the cardinal “ of a neighbouring king who should be

\* See Brissot's *Adresse à ses Commettans*, page 110, 111. He says Cambo was one chief author of this system.

“ powerful and peaceable at home.” It resembled that of Lewis XV. in 1744, and they were desirous to set up a national convention in England, on the same grounds that their king wanted to set up a popish pretender. Scotch covenanters, jacobites, reformers, and democrats, have all in their turns been made the unweeting tools of French ambition, and those very writers who declaim with such emphasis against this ruinous war, may, in some measure, take shame to themselves that ever it existed.

Our ministry have been ridiculed for encouraging an unnecessary panic amongst men of property in the winter of 1792. But could they avoid that panic when they knew the deputations that continually went over to France? when they heard the famous demagogue Gregoire answer one of these deputations, as president, that he “ hoped soon to congratulate them on a national convention in England?” and when they read all those predictions of revolts in this country which every French journal contained, and which looked more like

Gallic



Gallic indiscretions than like mere Gallic inventions ?

We have all heard of the Journal published by Condorcet, in which it is declared that the “ French revolution was the object, “ at once, of Englishmen’s fears and de- “ fires ; that a parliamentary reform was “ talked of, just as the meeting of the “ states general was in 1787 talked of in “ France ; and that from a reform the pas- “ sage to a republic would be short and “ easy.”

There are other important passages less known in England, and some may be quoted from the *Mercure de France*, a work always much read at Paris, and of which the political part was then taken out of the hands of Mallet-du-Pan.

November 1792. Page 285.

“ The agitations that prepare a revolution  
“ in Ireland make every day a new pro-  
“ gress. Supposing that the two islands  
“ are, or will soon be, determined to treat,  
“ as from equal to equal, they have very  
T “ interesting

“ interesting questions to consider. Shall  
 “ remain under one social organization, or  
 “ shall the channel of St. George divide two  
 “ nations and two sovereigns? If the  
 “ union shall continue, shall they continue  
 “ to have two legislative and one executive  
 “ power, or shall there be a unity of legis-  
 “ lation as well as execution? Lastly, shall  
 “ they continue under regal power? It were  
 “ vain to endeavour to prevent it, all the  
 “ political contracts of nations will be re-  
 “ newed.”

I quote this passage because it contains  
 an important lesson for the English nation,  
 who ought always to remember, that if ever  
 they abolish their present system of mo-  
 narchy, the *contracts* with their sister na-  
 tions will, indeed, stand in need of being  
*renewed*; and who can foresee how much  
 blood will be shed before those questions so  
*charitably* taught us by the French can  
 fairly be resolved?

Here is another passage from the same  
 work still more insulting, December 1792,  
 page 71.

London,

“ London, November 23.

“ No lords ! no upper house ! no king !  
 “ such is the cry of the English people in  
 “ the streets of London, and in the streets  
 “ of the other towns of England ; such is  
 “ the cry that resounds in the mountains of  
 “ Scotland, and in the plains of Ireland.  
 “ Puritans and catholics appear to have the  
 “ same political dogmas. There are none  
 “ but the king, with, perhaps, a few old  
 “ honest lords or knavish courtiers who  
 “ profess another *social religion*. The par-  
 “ liament is prorogued to next January.  
 “ But the month of January will come,  
 “ and George III. must soon resign himself  
 “ to make a new treaty with England, who  
 “ surely will give him a good pension, if  
 “ he resigns himself prudently to an in-  
 “ evitable revolution.\*

This

\* It may seem unnecessary to quote weaker paragraphs after so strong a one ; but I cannot help mentioning an article in *Gazette Nationale Française* of December the 14th. After describing how the inhabitants of Dundee planted the tree of liberty, and sung ça ira, the writer adds, “ the same ceremony was less  
 “ peaceable at York ; two thousand armed men pil-

This curious paragraph is dated precisely about the time when not only knavish courtiers and lords, but merchants and shopkeepers took alarm, and formed associations to defend the constitution, a step useful and even necessary at the time, on account of the many affiliated clubs which corresponded with France. But the example of the present age has shewed so evidently that all voluntary self-elected clubs may grow dangerous, that even the best meant associations are only to be commended as a fair retaliation of their own arts upon the enemy. George III. was not, however, afraid of his parliament, and called them together in December, without waiting for that month of January which the Parisians had marked out as fatal to his crown. Our *country gentlemen*, not merely our lords, were sufficiently incensed at the boldness of the French emissaries, and alarmed at the progress of their arms, to need but little incitement from a minister. Dumourier had

“laged the magazines and corn mills of the *Aristocrats*.” We see by this how soon a Frenchman’s eagerness turned reformers into aristocrats.

now



now driven the Austrians beyond Aix-la-Chapelle, and proposed to take Maestricht from the Dutch, on the same pretences exactly with which Lewis XV. had taken the forts of Dutch Flanders in 1747. The executive council did not agree to this measure, but their forbearance could hardly spring from moderation, since they were deliberating all that winter on schemes to invade the province of Zealand. Dumourier grew discontented, and soon after put his wearied troops into winter quarters. He had now full leisure to reflect on his situation. The Girondins remembered his attempt to remain in the king's service when Roland was dismissed, and did not thoroughly trust him; the Jacobins, especially Marat, hated him cordially, and contrived every means to disorganize his army; the war minister neglected to supply the necessities of the troops, and in the midst of all his triumphs Dumourier passed a very uneasy winter.

During this awful pause of hostilities, the assembly at Paris was employed in the cruel and unjust mockery of trying and

condemning to death their unhappy sovereign, against whom no crime was ever proved, and whose person had been declared inviolable by that constitution which all France had sworn to observe. Roberpierre and his party were bent upon his death; the party of Brissot were less violent, and made a faint effort to throw upon the nation at large the odium of his death, or the danger of his life, by voting to refer his sentence to the primary assemblies. They lost their motion in the convention, and it was represented to the public as a measure that might kindle a civil war. After this they no longer attempted to hazard their popularity by doing justice to an enemy, and most of them voted for death along with the Jacobins.

The demeanor of the unhappy king during his trial, and at his execution, and the paper he left behind him as his will, have raised his character after his death higher than his detractors could have expected, much higher than during the splendor of his early fortune. One sentiment in that will is remarkable. He tells the French it  
were

were better to have no king, than a king too straitly limited. This sentiment was uttered by a much greater prince than himself, by William III. who said to Bishop Burnet, “ There is much to be said both “ for a monarchy and a republic, and it is “ difficult to decide which is *best* ; but the “ *worst* of all governments is a monarchy “ where the king has no power.\*

Dumourier was at Paris during the trial ; he affirms that he meant to save the king ; his enemies affirm that he wished to hasten the king's fate, and raise the house of Orleans to the throne. The Duke of Orleans voted for his relation's death, and by that step so unequivocally displayed his bad heart, and rendered himself so completely odious, that the fans-culottes themselves abandoned him. Dumourier returned to his army, unhappy and discontented, ruminating vague projects against that convention which he affected to serve with zeal.

On receiving the news of Louis the Sixteenth's death, the English ministry, who

\* See Burnet's History, vol. iii. page 47.

had ordered Lord Gower to quit Paris, soon after the 10th of August, now ordered away Chauvelin, the French ambassador, whose commission they said was annihilated by that event. The French affected great resentment at this affront, but if Chauvelin, as many believe, was intriguing with our English malcontents, it is no wonder that our court was glad to be rid of him; and the present French directory have sufficiently shewn that the least suspicion of intrigue is enough to make them forget the respect due to ambassadors. Private negotiations were still going on in Holland, and Dumourier was appointed to meet Lord Auckland, near the Mordyke, to see what arrangements could be taken relative to the Scheld. But Brissot and his friends were too eager for an English war, and all parties were too jealous of Dumourier to wish well to such negotiations. On the 1st of February 1792, Brissot read a report to the convention, couched in the most hostile language, and war was immediately declared against England and Holland. War was soon after declared against Spain in a manner which

plainly



plainly contradicts Mr. Fox's assertion, that our court might have saved the poor king if they would have acknowledged the French republic. The Spanish ambassador had negotiated with the ruling party, and offered such an acknowledgment as the price of his life; but so far from delaying the fatal stroke, the insolence of such offers was given as one of the reasons for a declaration of war.

Much has been said on all sides of the perfidious intentions either of the English or the French ministry; of the affronts offered to France by the Alien Bill, by the dismissal of Chauvelin; of the danger arising to England from French emissaries, and to her finances from French assignats; but there were still deeper causes of the war, which it has been the aim of this essay to develope. Some of these secret causes may be found in the latter end of one of Brissot's Reports as early as the month of January.\*

\* See the fore-mentioned Collection of Brissot's Pamphlets, pages 54, 56, 57.

Brissot, after having inveighed with the utmost virulence against the English conduct in the East Indies, and predicted that our East India Company would soon sink “ into annihilation, loaded with debt, “ and covered with maledictions, like all “ other companies,” concluded with the following *Tartuffe* exhortation:—“ The “ English nation must at last, like us, seek “ its prosperity, not in an exclusive commerce, not in possessions torn from their “ proprietors, not in the art of squeezing “ out the sweat and the blood of the labourers and artisans of India, but in a “ commerce founded upon morality, universal justice, and a free developement “ of industry.”

When the last pages of this report are compared with the principles laid down in Brissot's *American Travels*, there appears sufficient ground for an opinion already hinted at, that it was not merely the abolition of nobility or monarchy that the French expected from their English friends, but the alteration of our commercial laws, and the relinquishment of all  
territory-

territorial possessions in India. A gasconading speech of M. Kerfaint on the conquests to be made from England and Holland, is in a similar style with Brissot; and if the Girondin party had not been ruined, they would probably have made some bold attempt to render Asia one of the theatres of war.

The question of peace or war may be reduced to this: Shall we suffer the emissaries of France to disorganize all Europe, that France may extend her empire, and conquer those countries which in her hands will be dangerous to our security, and which will furnish her with arms against our commerce, both foreign and domestic? If this be right, let us efface from our histories all the censures bestowed on our ancient or recent kings for similar conduct, and let us own Charles the Second for a patriot, instead of calling his reign (as Whig writers still call it) a reign of "misery and disgrace."\* The very opposition who now inveigh against the war, had they seen Brabant and Hol-

\* It is an expression in Hayley's Life of Milton.

land in the hands of France without the least effort to save them, the Prince of Orange an unprotected exile, and the Dutch and French joining to attack us in Asia, would, perhaps, have impeached Mr. Pitt for the very neutrality they so loudly recommended.

The French appear to have flattered themselves that their declaration of war would have produced a revolt both in Holland and in England. In this hope they were disappointed; but another of their hopes proved but too just, for Holland was nearly as unprovided for war, as Savoy or Nice had been. Dumourier set out, carrying with him the skilful engineer D'Arçon (who had invented the Gibraltar floating batteries) a number of Dutch emigrants, and a proclamation reviling the English and the Stadtholder. Breda surrendered in so shameful a manner that treachery was generally suspected, but Williamstadt made a stout defence under the brave old General Count Botzlaer. Miranda, a refugee creole Spaniard, attacked Maastricht, and summoned the magistrates



gistrates to surrender, with a proclamation as full of sanguinary threats as if he had been fighting under his old countryman, the Duke of Alva. To say that Maeftricht was bombarded is saying nothing extraordinary ; it is one of the dreadful rights of war ; but it is remarkable how vehemently the French inveighed against the Duke Albert for bombarding Lifle, and how little they have shewn themselves disposed to alleviate the rigour of the martial law. The scene was however destined to be quickly altered. Clairfait, Cobourg, and the Austrians had recovered their courage, and on the 1st of March crossed the little river Roer, and carried the enemy's entrenchments. They drove the French from Aix-la-Chapelle and Liege, and obliged Dumourier to abandon his invasion of Holland. On the 18th of March he attacked the Austrians at Nerwinde, was defeated, retired, blaming Miranda, (who on his side blamed Dumourier) and was obliged to evacuate Brabant as rapidly as he had conquered it, whilst the inhabitants received the Austrians with such joy, that it did not seem likely that they would so

tamely have admitted the French in another year. This sudden change of fortune is greatly to be attributed to the bad discipline of the troops, and the seditious spirit they had imbibed from the orators of the Jacobin clubs.

Dumourier reduced to despair, and knowing that his head would be forfeited, wrote a long letter to the convention, reproaching them with their injustice towards the Brabançons, and begun to negotiate secretly with the Austrians. The convention sent Bournonville, Camus, and some others, to seize Dumourier; he delivered them up to Cobourg, and endeavoured to persuade his whole army to follow him to Paris and restore the poor infant king with the constitution of 1791. The attempt failed, Dumourier was obliged to go over to the Austrians with one or two faithful regiments: his prior negotiations ensured him his liberty, but he has ever since lived most reluctantly in a state of exile and obscurity. The eldest son of the Duke of Orleans accompanied him in his flight, an event which accelerated the final ruin of the father.

father. His money was at last exhausted, and his influence perished with it; he was committed to prison with most of his associates, and never regained his liberty.

To relate all the events of this astonishingly varied war, is the province of regular history, not of an essay. I shall only make some remarks upon this memorable epoch, and upon the censures thrown on the conduct of the allies.

Dumourier, in his *Memoires*, and almost all the emigrants of every party, have severely blamed the Prince of Cobourg for withdrawing the proclamation published at at the moment when Dumourier hoped to have drawn over all his army to attack the convention. This proclamation declared, that his sovereign did not intend to make conquests in France, but that the Austrian troops should only act as auxiliaries to Dumourier. After the utter ruin of Dumourier's hopes, a meeting was held at Antwerp amongst the ministers of the coalesced powers, a second proclamation annulled the first, and expressed a design of keeping  
such

such places as were taken by way of indemnity. Dumourier\* professes that upon this change of plan, he declared to the Prince of Cobourg that he could not with honor serve against France, desired and received assurances of protection for his unhappy followers, and obtained a passport for his safe retreat.

An author, who beyond all others truly predicted the consequences of the revolution, but who never was very favourable to England, Mallet-du-Pan, has, in a late pamphlet, gone so far in his censures,† as to say that on the first proclamation, the interior parts of France themselves had begun to stir, when it was immediately repealed by a second. To shew the exaggeration of this statement, it is sufficient to observe, that the first proclamation was signed on the 5th of April, and the next at no longer distance than the 9th, and that in these four days interval, all that could possibly have reached the ears of the allies,

\* See Dumourier's Memoires, pages 200 to 205.

† See the First Part of Mallet's Correspondence sur la Revolution.



was the total failure of Dumourier's influence over his army, and the horror with which the news of his attempt to march against the convention was (to all appearance) received in France. Since the first proclamation appeared to have had no effect to sway the minds of Frenchmen, it could not be expected that the allies should continue bound by it during the whole war, and renounce the power of acting as circumstances might direct.

There is reason to believe that Austria had no intention to make conquests during the king's life. There is as much reason to think that the king only desired such amendments in the constitution as sufficed to render it less heterogeneous. It is a presumption in his favour, that whilst he lived, Peltier in the various numbers of his *Tableau de Paris*, did not speak of entirely restoring the old constitution, and in some passages rather commended the king for studying latterly the works of the \*mo-

\* Monarchians or monarchists:—the party who wanted a King and Two Houses of Parliament.

narchian writers, Mounier, Malouet, Necker, &c. But the moment that his fate was certain, a new tone was given to that publication, and nothing was more insisted on, than the impossibility of governing France with a representative assembly. For those principles I ever must blame that writer, and most others who defended the cause of the early royalist emigrants.

It seems as if it was the intention of the republicans to make their party desperate, by cutting off the only man whose gentle temper could have given probability to a reconciliation and a limited monarchy, and thus to put the French nation between the alternatives of despotic power, the loss of some provinces, or a triumphant ambitious republic. They killed their king on the same principle that Cortez burnt his ships when he landed with five hundred Spaniards to overturn the powerful empire of Mexico, and it is grievous to reflect how often the expedients of despair are successful. This is a severe lesson to theorists who begin revolutions upon fancied principles of humanity, and generally find, too late,

late, that murder is necessary to make them effectual. Had the unfortunate Lewis been still alive, perhaps the proclamation should not have been recalled, but the case was now a very different one. A good Frenchman might have thought it his duty to release and restore the king, and yet have hesitated at taking up arms to set a helpless infant on the throne, with a regency instantly disputed between a hated queen, two hated princes, and Dumourier himself, or any other ambitious general. As a desperate resource it was right to try whether Dumourier's scheme could put an end to this ruinous war, but it did not promise much happiness or quiet to any party. What was the constitution he proposed to restore? The impracticable constitution of 1791, that insociable, intolerant constitution which declared every nation enslaved in which subordination of rank, or distinction of birth existed in the least degree; that constitution which by the means of clubs had sent its emissaries every where to stir up the rich against the noble, and the poor against the rich; that constitution which allowed and applauded deputations

openly received from the malcontents of all other countries, and during whose short existence as much insolence had been uttered, and as many principles favourable to French ambition asserted, as in the whole reign of Lewis the Fourteenth. If Dumourier had attempted any alterations, which Mallet-du-Pan seems to hint, it would have been said plausibly enough, that no emendations could take place during a minority, and a new war might have recommenced on that score. And who was Dumourier himself that the allies could trust him? The firebrand of all Europe! however he may disguise the fact in his *Memoires*; the man who had spared no pains to revive the deadly malice of the French against Austria;\* and worst of all, the man who still lay under the imputation of wishing not to protect the young king, but to set up the infamous Duke of Orleans.

Had the royalist and constitutional parties at that critical moment laid aside their

\* I do not pretend to decide how far those suspicions were just, but only mention their existence.



mutual hatred, acknowledged that their faults had been reciprocal, and their pretensions exaggerated; had they agreed to revise and alter the first erroneous constitution as soon as the young king's title was generally acknowledged—France and Europe might still have been happy. But each side remained inflexible, and above all, the princes and their royalist emigrants. Perhaps after such mutual injuries; to expect such moderate behaviour was to demand too much from human frailty! but if so melancholy a reflection be true, the impracticability of a reconciliation made it impossible to place the lawful heir upon the throne of France. The emigrants could least of all suppose that England would exhaust her blood and treasure to restore the French royal family precisely to their former situation. Austria had a direct personal interest in their restoration, England could only have a very indirect one indeed! for as long as the house of Bourbon possessed the least power, it had used it to our detriment; we might hope their misfortunes had taught them prudence, but we could not be so sure of their reformation as

to risque much in their cause. Besides, had the emigrants ever considered how deeply the abhorrence of the old constitution of France was rooted in the minds of Englishmen? Many emigrants who used that expression did not indeed mean despotism, but a certain idea they had formed of a constitution which existed in France before Lewis the Eleventh first introduced tyrannical power. But this was too subtle a distinction for *John Bull* to comprehend. He had been told for ages, sometimes by government, sometimes by opposition, that the constitution of France was all that was shocking and wicked; a few months were not sufficient to efface that idea, and any minister who had talked of restoring it could never have stood the clamour that would have been raised. We have seen Mr. Pitt's popularity weakened by the imputation of such a project thrown on him, I believe unjustly, by the opposition. *John Bull* would readily fight to *ensfeeble* France, but not to *enslave* it, (at least, in *his* opinion *enslave* it) because *his* *ruminating brain* would soon imagine that *his* own turn was to come next. This is not said with

with a view to introduce idle pleasantries on so serious a subject, but to state a real matter of fact. If the emigrants would inquire how much the Quebec bill added unpopularity to the American war, because it was circulated that Lord North intended to govern America upon French laws and principles, they would have a juster idea of the embarrassments that a minister has to encounter from the spirit of the English nation. What, then, remained in so perplexing a situation? To endeavour to confine the Jacobin fury within the limits of France, and, for that purpose, to weaken that *iron frontier* which enabled France, not so much to defend herself, as to carry sword and fire into the heart of Europe without fear of retaliation. To *do* what had been left *undone* by the peace of Utrecht, and what Lord Bolingbroke so heavily laments that he was disabled from doing. His own words, quoted in a former page, may be referred to, for they are so much to the purpose that nothing can be added to them. I will even coincide with his sentiment, that it would have been wrong to have asked France to "sacrifice more

“ than was necessary for the future security  
 “ of her neighbours.”\* England, who in  
 the last age had suffered from carrying her  
 views against Spain too far, ought to have  
 interfered if a real dismemberment like that  
 of Poland had been proposed. *Diis aliter*  
*visum!*

But though the emigrants born French-  
 men, and Mallet-du-Pan bred up in France,  
 may think this scheme a project of ambi-  
 tion, to Englishmen and Germans it must  
 appear much rather a project of self-de-  
 fence. Poland had not deserved to suffer,  
 because it had not for at least an hundred  
 and fifty years attacked any European  
 power, nor ever attempted to impose its  
 own constitution on its neighbours sword  
 in hand. The provocations given by  
 France are evident, and yet so strong is the  
 power of a name, that those unlucky  
 words, *old constitution* and *partition*, have  
 cast an odium on a scheme, which if our

\* Some pamphlets went too far in their schemes of  
 retrenchment, such as, for instance, Playfair's Thoughts  
 on French Politics, 1793.



own and the Austrian ministry had always presented under its antient name of a *barrier*, no Englishmen could have condemned without condemning almost all those men whom we have been used to esteem as patriotic, wise, or great.

It may easily be said now, that our splendid hopes have ended in disappointment, that having once rescued Holland and Flanders from France, we ought in prudence to have sat down contented, and avoided all further expences and dangers by making peace with the convention. But on a retrospective view it would be difficult to find in all the fleeting months and days in 1793, an hour in which peace could have been honourably offered to the convention, and still less an hour in which the rulers of France would have listened to terms of peace distressed and endangered as they were. An hereditary king would probably have sent offers to his enemies, but hereditary kings seldom fight with the wild energy of despair.

During

During the months of April, May, and June, the convention was in such a disordered situation, that it was impossible to know what authority could be applied to; and there appeared great reason to hope that although monarchy might not be restored, yet this wicked, ambitious convention, which had declared war against all existing government, would be destroyed by the very hands which had raised it. The divisions grew every day more violent between the Girondin party and the Jacobins, supported by the usurping municipality of Paris. Brissot, who in his Preface to his Travels in America, had hypocritically lamented that merchants and bankers would think themselves superior to artisans, was now grown the protector of bankers and rich men, and was writing vigorously against the sect of levellers who were making a daily progress, and against the influence of the rabble of Paris. In his famous Address to his Constituents, he loudly tells them that foreign powers “ will not treat with a convention that is “ every day dragged through the dust, and “ with an executive power continually de-  
“ nounced,

“nounced, humiliated, and tottering.”—He goes so far as to hint that the convention should either quit Paris, or take into its own hands the government of that city, an opinion which probably contributed to the unpopularity of the Girondins amongst the Parisians.\*

The set of Girondin ministers who had been replaced after the 10th of August, were weeded out one by one, beginning by Roland, whose homilies on public virtue soon grew as wearisome to the convention as those of Neckar upon moderation had grown to the constituent assembly, and he was mocked at as a weak old man, governed by his wife, who wrote speeches and reports under his name. The Jacobins now intended to purge the convention of its Girondin members, and did not want for writers (amongst whom Camilles Desmoulins distinguished himself by a work called *Les Brissotins*) to retaliate the arms of sarcasm and invective against their adversaries. As the latter appealed to the de-

\* See Brissot's Address, page 156, 157-

partments against the injustice of the Parisians, so the Jacobins invented a new opprobrious epithet of *Federalists*, and supposed that the Girondins intended to make every department an independent sovereignty, resembling the Thirteen States of North America. The majority of the convention was alarmed at the dark plots that seemed preparing, and formed a committee to examine into the conduct of the municipality. On the 30th of May an armed mob intimidated the assembly into a revocation of that committee: on the 31st, the train bands of Paris, under the command of Henriot, marched against the convention, (as they had formerly marched against the king) and petitioned for a decree of arrest against thirty-five members of the Girondin party. The frightened and irresolute assembly referred this petition to the 2d of June, and on that day the terrors of the Parisian army finally prevailed, as many of the deputies as had not escaped were thrown into prison, and those who protested against the violence were turned out from their seats.

See Barras's Address, page 126.

This



This révolution did not pass over with as little opposition as the others had done: Pethion, Barbaroux, and several other Girondins, retired into Normandy, and prepared for a civil war. It was preceded by a singular event, which seemed to realize the scenes of tragedy and romance. Marat, that villain, who from the year 1789, had never ceased to stir up the people to bloodshed and rapine, was assassinated by a young woman, Charlotte Cordé, who devoted herself to certain death to rid her country of a monster. It is difficult at first sight not to be dazzled with her heroism; but when we examine this event with unprejudiced eyes, we shall find, that like all other assassinations, it aggravated the crimes of the survivors, and answered no end but to make them hunger and thirst for the blood of their enemies.

The insurrection in Normandy was quickly suppressed, but in Poitou and Brittany the genuine royalists took advantage of these troubles to kindle the civil war of La Vendée amongst the peasants, irritated to madness at the cruelty with which their  
priests

priests had been treated. At the same time Lyons, Marfeilles, and Toulon, prepared for their defence against the levellers. The wealthy merchants had discovered too late that if you preach equality to the poor and ignorant, they will understand it to mean equality of property. At Lyons, some royalists joined the discontented men of property, and they bravely prepared themselves to support a regular siege.

It would have been too humiliating to have sued for peace to a country so divided, and to a party so infamous as that of the levellers ; and besides, there still remained many countries conquered, and re-united under the mask of their false principles, and till these were all taken from them, the mischief of the example was not done away. Unfortunately, the Germans proceeded with their usual slowness. The whole months of April, May, June, and July were consumed by the Austrians in surrounding, besieging, and taking (in all due forms of war) the towns of Condé and Valenciennes. The King of Prussia outdid his old rivals in slowness, and though  
he

he had driven Custine from Francfort during the winter, he did not retake Mentz (an important object of the war) till July the 23d. Savoy and Nice still remained, and though they might appear of less importance than Flanders and Germany, yet there was nothing in the character and conduct of the King of Sardinia, which authorized the allies to leave him the victim of a war which he had not provoked. Very unfortunately the Austrian and Piedmontese expedition against Savoy proved unsuccessful, the forces employed not being sufficiently numerous. So that there never existed a moment in which the allies had regained all that France had unjustly usurped, and could have offered her peace, on condition of reverting to her old limits, therefore all the arguments grounded on the supposition of such a moment fall to the ground. But the rulers of France were not disposed to accede to such terms, for in the month of August, when Savoy was threatened, it was solemnly affirmed in the convention, that it was an integral part of France, and never could be yielded, and the commemoration of the 10th of August

was

was attended by deputies from the eighty-six departments, which included most of the conquered countries.\*

The civil war in the south did not turn out favourably to the men of property. Marseilles was forced to submit to all the horrors of levelling tyranny on the 25th of August, and the administrators of Toulon, in despair, put their town into the hands of the English immediately after, declaring that they acknowledged the constitution of 1791, and the young Lewis XVII. This treaty was the hasty work of a moment that allowed no time for deliberation; it would have appeared folly in Admiral Hood not to have profited of so unexpected an offer, and yet it embarrassed our future conduct with new difficulties. We could not make peace with the convention till we had seen whether other towns in the south of France would follow the example of Toulon, nor could we abandon its wretched inhabitants without making some efforts in their defence. We had not tempted them, indeed,

\* See Lord Mornington's Speech.



to revolt, as opposition has sometimes hinted, we found them engaged in a civil war, but they had called us in to protect them from death, and we were bound to afford them protection. Lyons made a noble resistance, but was compelled to surrender on the 8th of October, and the horrid cruelties exercised by Collot d'Herbois and other jacobins, not over courtiers and nobles, but over merchants and manufacturers, are so shocking that the mind recoils from the recital with horror. It is sufficient to shew how naturally democracy leads to savage—ay! and *swinish* levelling, in spite of Mr. Burke's opponents, that some of the noblest works of architecture were ordered to be destroyed because they had been the houses of the rich malcontents, and it was proposed to erect a column with this inscription, “ Lyons has revolted against liberty, Lyons is no more!”\*

\* The democracy of Athens encouraged the arts, but not till Pericles had assumed almost monarchical authority, and he has been censured for misleading the people into arts of luxury. Similar remarks may be made on Florence and the Medici family.

Had the expedition against Savoy succeeded, this devoted city might have been saved, and some great change in affairs might have happened, but the blame of that failure must lay upon the Austrians and Piedmontese—and can, in no respect, be imputed to the English.

Our councils are, perhaps, more liable to blame for permitting the Duke of York to separate from the Prince of Cobourg, after the taking of Valenciennes, and attempting the siege of Dunkirk with the English and Hanoverians. But the possession of Dunkirk was, at all times, considered as a measure so calculated to secure our commerce, that the people of England ought, in justice, to excuse this error in the conduct of ministers. We were repulsed, however, at Dunkirk, and from that time the tide of affairs began to turn in favour of the French, who made incursions into Flanders, which, if they did not entirely succeed, tended to revive their hopes of that great object, the conquest of Flanders. Danton, very soon after the republic was established, spoke out, and told all Europe,  
that

that nature herself had decreed that France should extend to the Alps, the Rhine, and the ocean, the very project supposed to have been formed by Richelieu. Many other speakers and orators asserted this newly discovered law of nature,\* amongst them *Publicola Chauffard*, in his *Memoires Historiques et Politiques sur la Revolution de la Belgique*, and the extravagant Anarchist Cloots, who, during this autumn, got one of his pamphlets to be circulated by the Jacobin club, called Revolutionary Diplomats, written, amongst other purposes, to prove that France ought not to purchase peace by sacrificing the Netherlands. Nothing, in the mean while, could exceed the violence of the threats and invectives which were continually poured upon the whole English nation: it was an usual figure of speech to compare Paris to Rome, and London to Carthage, and *delenda est Carthago* was as much the motto of Barrere as ever it had been of Cato the censor.

\* See Gifford's Answer to Lord Lauderdale and Lord Mornington's Speech.

Towards the end of the year the Germans made another effort on the side of Alsace; Marshal Wurmser forced the lines of Weissemburg, and the Prussians attempted the blockade of Landau. Some blame the slowness of Wurmser, both in his military career, and in his private negotiations with the malcontents, but whatever was the cause, the whole enterprise failed, the repeated attacks of the French drove the Germans from Alsace in the month of December, and in the same month the English were forced to evacuate Toulon. The defence of that place had, from necessity, been entrusted to a mixed collection of troops, English, Spaniards, Neapolitans, Piedmontese, and there too little of the blame can lie upon the English; the allies first gave way, the surrounding forts were taken, and nothing was left for the English but to destroy the ships and bring away the inhabitants.

We have been blamed for not succouring the insurgents in the Vendée, but the chiefs in that country were never united amongst themselves, nor were they masters of a spot



on the sea coast where ammunition might be landed. They did make an attempt to reach the sea during the autumnal months, but the peasants grew so jealous, that their leaders meant to escape by means of English vessels, as to force them to return into the heart of the country. That whole war bears a strong resemblance to the war of the protestants in the Cevennes in Lewis the Fourteenth's time, and in nothing more, than in that pertinacious obstinacy in mistake which first kindled it, and in the horrid cruelty with which it has been carried on. It may stand on record as one of the instances in which popular assemblies have imitated the errors of despots. Another melancholy proof was furnished by all these transactions of the impossibility of restoring monarchy, whilst the friends of monarchy are so disunited. The Vendéans and the Toulonese professed such different principles in religion and government, that if they had conquered the republicans, they would have been ready to commence a civil war with each other.

A melancholy change had taken place in the state of affairs previous to the year 1794. The Jacobins had affected to satisfy the people with a very democratical constitution voted in the summer of 1793, which, in several cases, gave a right of controuling the legislature to the primary assemblies. But it never was put in execution, not even for a day; the convention deferred it till peace should be restored, and, in the mean time, established the executive power of two committees of safety, who governed with all the tyranny of a Moorish divan, and who had an evident interest to prolong the war, which was necessary to prolong their existence.

The unhappy queen was treated with the most studied insult and cruelty by the villains who presided in the municipality of Paris, and at last dragged her to a mock trial, and execution, which she suffered with that firmness which had always marked her character; a character formed by nature for virtue and heroism, though fatally led astray by the force of bad example.

In the ensuing winter, they continued their butchery of the royal family by executing the virtuous Elizabeth, sister to the late king, a princess on whom calumny itself had never presumed to affix a stain. This action may be reckoned amongst the most black, because the most unnecessary of all Jacobinical crimes. An execution which preceded it by some months had more of “necessity—the tyrant’s plea” to urge in its defence. The execution, I mean of Brissot and his colleagues,\* those men who, by their own confession, had kindled the flames of foreign and domestic war, perished unlamented, by good men at least, amidst the conflagration they had raised, and all the reproaches they had heaped upon royalists and constitutionals were retorted on their own heads by the Jacobins. But it was impossible for the gentlest spirit to refrain from what Beattie finely calls † “the stifled smile of stern vindictive

\* *J’ai fait déclarer la guerre.* Those words of Brissot never should be forgot.

† In the first part of his *Minstrel*, when Edwin hears the children in the wood, and the punishment of the cruel uncle.

“joy,” when the Duke of Orleans followed his victims to the grave, and gave an awful example to princes how they suffer resentment to hurry them into the cabals of dark, malicious conspirators. Another awful example was soon after given to men of science in the less merited fate of Bailly, who, for having ordered La Fayette to fire upon the insurgents in the Champ de Mars, was dragged to execution amidst unusual and aggravated insults, more bitter than the actual stroke of death. Nor were the military more respected than other ranks of life. Custine, who had invaded Germany, Houchard, who repulsed the English from Dunkirk, were condemned to death because they had not always been victorious. Many persons thought the convention would never again find generals to serve them, but, on the contrary, the French successes seemed to prove that men never fight so bravely, as when they know that conquest or death is their only alternative. A new stile of tactics was introduced, every general was ordered to attack incessantly, to pay no regard to the lives of his soldiers, and if re-

pulsed



pulsed one day, to return to the charge the next. As the Jacobins were now triumphant, it was their interest to restore that discipline which their popular artifices had destroyed, and for that purpose the commissaries of the convention who attended the armies, instituted a code in which the slightest offences were punished with death.\*

The campaign of 1794 opened, therefore, under very different auspices from the last. I leave to the historian the painful task of describing minutely, how the great work of conquering Flanders and Holland which Lewis XIV. had failed in, was achieved by these enthusiastic republicans. The first events of the campaign did not appear favourable to the French. Landrecies was taken on the 1st of May, but that town, which had been the boundary of Prince Eugene's exploits, proved also the limits of victory to the present allies. Such multitudes poured into Flanders, first on the side of Lisle, and then of Charleroi, that Belgia was once more completely over-run.

\* See David's Account of Pichegru's Campaign.

Those fortified towns taken from the French, Condé and Valenciennes, attempted some resistance, when Robespierre, who had already been the author of an execrable decree, ordering no quarter to be given to English and Hanoverians, passed another, declaring that those garrisons should meet with no quarter if they resisted to the last. Whether fear or treachery determined a surrender, I will not pretend to say, but they opened their gates to the French after a very slight opposition, in the beginning of September, just at the time it was hoped that Clairfait would have advanced to their relief. The Austrians on one side, the Dutch and English on the other, were driven, step by step, beyond the Rhine, the Meuse, and the Wahl, and even these rivers proved ineffectual barriers.

There can be little doubt but that secret discord and disunion contributed to the repeated losses of the allies. England was the only power whose arms had been in any degree crowned with success during that eventful year. We had gained, on the first of June, a glorious naval victory in the ocean, our fleet in the Mediterranean had,

had, after the evacuation of Toulon, taken Corsica from France, which, possibly, might give umbrage to Spain. But our conquests in the West Indies certainly displeased the Austrians, who began to think that they were fighting for empty glory, whilst England ran away with the profit. And yet those conquests were forced upon us by a kind of necessity. Had Mr. Pitt been that Machiavelian statesman which the French pretend to think him, he might, in the Autumn of 1792, have dispatched a fleet to the West Indies, and, perhaps, have received the voluntary submission of the then existing administrations who feared the new republic, lest it should do what Robespierre at last accomplished in the beginning of 1794, not only declare the blacks free, but put the government into their hands, for the express purpose of ruining the English islands. So far from being very eager for West Indian conquests, Mr. Pitt's chief fault has been not sending troops early enough to secure our possessions. The loss of Guadeloupe, so soon after it was taken, shook our empire in the west, but yet a dangerous impression was made,

and

and still was fixed in the hearts of our allies. The artifices of the French have ever been employed to make the continental powers jealous of our extensive trade and increasing wealth; and they wilfully shut their eyes to this truth, that it is the wealth of England which has so frequently hindered all the neighbouring states from becoming provinces to France. Old Tories and modern republicans may ask why we have thus employed our wealth? I shall only answer, that notwithstanding our just confidence in our marine, yet most perilous will be that day, when France, mistress of all the west of Europe, can turn without interruption its united force upon England.

The only event amidst the miseries of the European world, from which humanity could derive any consolation, was the fall of Robespierre. He, and his associates, had carried on the government for many months with that despotic energy which can never be safely exerted, but when the people in the vain hopes of *equality*, have been deceived into giving unbounded power  
to



to their favourites. The French armies had ever since the summer of 1793, been recruited by compulsory requisitions of all the young men in France, and fed by requisitions of all the grain and cattle of the farmers. A measure was pursued, which will probably ever be the darling measure of a majority, whose votes, according to the metaphysical rights of nature, are ascertained by numbers, not by property. Under the name of *Loi du Maximum*, a fixed price was put upon all necessary articles, and to the astonishment of the poor, their distresses only increased hourly, and it was discovered that the *sovereign majority* may be in the wrong and the minority in the right. Wealth became a crime as an oppression of the poor, and an invasion of natural equality. Some of Mr. Burke's predictions were fully verified; and the rich men of the world, who had laughed at the sudden poverty of *fat monks*, and *lazy canons*, found that their own *innocuous* indolence exposed them to a similar fate. They were called neutrals, indifferents, moderates, and declared to be amongst those suspected persons whom the revolutionary

tionary committees had the power to imprison.

Revolutionary tribunals were established upon principles of arbitrary decision that a Tiberius would scarce have invented: the estates of their victims were confiscated to support the immense expences of the war, or prop the falling credit of the French assignats: and Robespierre coolly said, that the guillotine coined money. The list of respectable victims to this unprecedented systematic cruelty would fill whole volumes, but every good man must distinguish amongst them the excellent Malesherbes. His unblemished and patriotic character had induced Lewis XVI. early in his reign, to solicit the assistance of his councils. He soon quitted the ministry, having too clearly discerned, that the king's indecisive temper, which hastily seized a plausible scheme, and as hastily forsook it, rendered it impossible for a steady minister to serve him. Retired from public business, in the hour of his former master's extreme distress, when others shrunk from the last request of the neglected king, Malesherbes boldly stood forth,

forth; and solicited the dangerous honour of pleading his cause before the convention. This noble exertion made him odious to the Jacobins; they seized the first trivial pretence to condemn him, and (as Tacitus says of Nero when he persecuted Thrasea) in destroying his person, they hoped to destroy even virtue itself.

Friendship cannot long exist amongst villains sunk into the last degrading stage of vice. In the spring of 1794, Danton and Robespierre grew jealous of each other, the Cordelier club quarrelled with the Jacobins, and hoped to overturn it (as the Jacobins had overturned the Feuillants) Hebert, procureur of the municipality, headed the former, and Robespierre the latter party. In this battle between *two tigers*, Robespierre prevailed, and Hebert, with many others, were arrested, summarily convicted of treason, and executed on the 29th of March. His cruelty to the royal family, and his attempts to establish atheism, have made his name (if possible) more detestable than that of Robespierre himself. Danton, the most stern  
and

and courageous of all this herd of villains, with Camille Desmoulins, Fabre d'Eglantine, and others, were arrested two days afterwards, and executed before they had time to recover from their surprise, and form plans to defend themselves. Robespierre, sensible that the atheism of Hebert was growing unpopular, instituted a festival in honour of the Supreme Being; and with an insolence almost as scandalous as the other's impiety, affected to behave like a high priest come to reveal the existence of God to a people of savages. But if he did believe in a God, he certainly paid no respect to the image of God implanted in the soul of man. The guillotine, actuated by his mere will and pleasure, every day devoured more victims, and yet his thirst for blood was unsatisfied. The *tyrant* of *antiquity* was now blazing forth in all its horrors; that character so little known in modern times, and so wrongfully confounded with hereditary monarchs; that genuine democratic tyrant, whom the discontented poor set over the community to humble the rich, and who ends by involving rich and poor in one universal oppression.



sion. Robespierre spared none of any class; the wealthy financier was sent to the scaffold, because he *might* have cheated the public many years before, and the poor starving cook-maid was beheaded, because she had used anti-revolutionary expressions.\* But the more he slew, the more he grew afraid of all who survived; and though he governed at once the convention, the municipality, and the Jacobins, yet he saw a faction rising against him in the committee of public safety. St. Just and Couthon were devoted to his will, but Barrere, Collot d'Herbois, and Billaud de Varennes formed a second triumvirate who sometimes thwarted it, and wished to spare divers members of the convention whom he had devoted. It is pretended, that an accident happened, similar to that which destroyed one of his *predecessors* in *tyranny*, the Emperor Commodus.† A jurymen of the revolutionary tribunal was taken up by the rival triumvirate, on some cause of suspicion; on him (it is said) they found a

\* *Tenu des propos anti-revolutionnaires*, were the precise words.

† See Histoire de la Conjuraton de Robespierre.

list of Robespierre's intended victims, with their own names at the head of the bloody scroll, and assuming courage from despair, they resolved to strike the first blow. On the 27th of August, when St. Just mounted the tribune to denounce to the convention some more of its members, he was interrupted by the most violent clamours, Tallien, Barrere, and Billaud, inveighed against Robespierre, and his supporters, the Jacobins. The convention decreed that Robespierre, his younger brother, Couthon, St. Just, and Le Bas, should be arrested. They were secured, and carried out of the assembly, but instead of taking them to prison, the municipal officers sheltered them in the Hotel-de-Ville, and prepared to defend their friends by force of arms. The event was remarkable, since for the first time since the beginning of the revolution, the convention got the better of the municipality. Robespierre and his associates were dragged, wounded, and half-expiring, to that scaffold which they had prepared for others: the man who but three days before was applauded as the most immaculate of patriots, was branded unanimously for

for a tyrant, and the French were obliged to confess, that for the last twelve months they had been the meanest of slaves.

Those slaves, however, had still the honour of having baffled all the coalesced monarchs of Europe; their new rulers were determined that honour should not be forfeited under a milder government, and the events in the east of Europe, facilitated their schemes of conquest in the west.

The revolutions and final partition of Poland belong not to my present subject, any farther, than to give my opinion, that they have been very principal causes of the failure of the coalition, and to confess, that whole transaction to be as melancholy an instance of the successful injustice of kings, as the French is of the successful injustice of republicans. During the year 1794, an attempt was made by some brave and desperate Poles, headed by Kosciusko, to vindicate the liberty of Poland, and the French were commonly supposed to have treated them, as the Kings of France had often treated the unhappy Scotch Jacobites—

sent them money to begin an insurrection, and afterwards left them to their fate. The King of Prussia, immediately after receiving a subsidy from England, withdrew almost all his troops to defend his ill-acquired territories, the few that remained were stationed on the German frontiers; and the defence of Holland, which the interest of a sister, a daughter, and an infant grandson, called him to undertake, was entirely abandoned, though we had probably given him the subsidy for that very purpose.

In the end of 1794, the Stadtholder reduced to despair, sent ministers to Paris to treat of peace and neutrality for Holland. The behaviour of the French on that occasion shewed that his utter ruin was their decided object; and if England had sent ministers at the same time, they would have been treated with equal contempt.

The Dutch envoys were purposely delayed on the road, till that uncommon hard frost, which marked the commencement of 1795, enabled the French to cross  
into



into Holland upon the ice, at a period when it was impossible to inundate the country, and when the nation had lost all its spirit for desperate resources. The Stadtholder with his family sheltered themselves in England from a fate, perhaps, as cruel as that of Lewis XVI. The friends of France were put into the administration of every province; and then the envoys were gravely told, that the government which sent them no longer existed, but if they pleased they might go to Paris as private men.—The French shewed more moderation in Holland than they had shewed in Flanders; they affected to leave the new states as an independent republic, but obliged them to surrender to France Maestricht, and Dutch Flanders, those places so essential to their barrier—the very terms which his wisest counsellors had recommended to Lewis XIV. in 1762. They also compelled them to a treaty of union defensive and offensive against England, thus obliging us to destroy their commerce in the East, or to hazard the destruction of our own, whilst their prince, so vilified and defamed, would have secured them neutrality, commerce, and safety.

safety. If at any future time they should wish to relieve themselves from this obligation of being our enemies, the French are at their doors, and may again over-run their country. In this state of humiliation our narrative must leave the Dutch, only repeating our opinion, that the primary cause of their ruin may be traced to that uncertainty in their constitution, which has made them change their forms of government nearly ten times in the course of 250 years; and that every state which follows a similar conduct will become a prey to foreign influence, or be condemned to perpetual foreign wars, to divert its restless spirit from its governors at home.

Soon after this revolution, the King of Prussia avowedly deserted the alliance, and the French acknowledged *that* prince as a friend, who had published the very manifesto so perpetually attacked by declaimers as the cause of all their crimes, whilst they pursued to destruction the inoffensive Stadtholder, who always wished for neutrality. But it was the house of Nassau which had  
formerly

formerly stood in the way of French conquests, and not the house of Brandenburg!

Spain, which had been forced into the war by the Jacobin party, was terrified, and exhausted by the contest, and glad to purchase peace by the surrender of Hispaniola. Thus relieved from half their enemies, the French continued their career of victory, took the strong fortrefs of Luxemburg early in the summer, and pushed their conquests to the Rhine, whilst the Austrians looked on, and made no attempt at relieving Luxemburg. Neither did the French for some months attempt to cross that river, discouraged, perhaps, by the uncertain state of affairs at Paris.

The party who ruled the convention was chiefly composed of those leaders who to save their own lives had destroyed Robespierre, and who for distinction were called Thermidorians, because that event happened in their new month of Thermidor. They felt the insecurity of their situation and the narrowness of the ground on which they stood. The unanimous cry of general horror

obliged them to give up to public resentment some of the ministers of the late dreadful tyranny ; the cruelties committed at Nantes, Lyons, and other places, were inquired into ; and at last, even Barrere, Collot, and Billaud themselves were tried, and condemned to transportation. But the remnant of the Jacobins (ludicrously stiled the *tail of Robespierre*) considered these acts of justice as insults, and prepared for revenge. The ruling party wished, but feared to be reconciled to the Girondins, whom they had helped to ruin ; and in this state of suspense there are some reports that they entered into negociations with Monsieur, then residing at Verona, but found that he would not adopt their schemes of government. It is more certain that they negociated with the Vendéens of Poitou, and the Chouans of Brittany ; and a treaty was signed with some of their principal chiefs (Charette in particular) of which very different accounts have been given. Charette has positively asserted, that they promised to deliver the young king into his hands, some time in the month of June, and even gave



gave him hopes that they would concert measures for a restoration of monarchy.

The truth of all these stories is uncertain, but the resentment of the Jacobin party broke out in actions too dreadfully evident to be denied. The mob of Paris were again instigated to complain of the dearth of provisions, and to demand that the popular constitution of 1793 should at length be put in practice. On the 21st of May, the rabble broke into the convention, blood was shed in the sacred hall of legislature, and that assembly which had delighted in the image of beheaded monarchs, were terrified with the sight of the bleeding head of Ferraud, one of their own colleagues, carried on a pike. Most of the Thermidorians ran away in despair, the Jacobin members remained, and were beginning to repeal all the late decrees, and re-instate themselves in sovereign power, when Legendre, having in that interval collected an armed force, returned, accompanied with troops, and drove the rabble and their partisans from the hall. Thus the resolution of a very few members saved  
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the convention, Paris, and France itself, from a revival of the system of terror; all men of property, and even the royalists themselves, were ready to flock to the standard of the convention as their only safeguard. Yet it required some days to subdue the rebellious Faux-bourg St. Antoine, the bulwark of the first revolution, but whose revolutionary principles were now considered as crimes. Regular troops were collected on all sides, a camp formed in the Thuilleries, military commissions instituted to try rebels, and all those measures taken, which had been declared in 1789 unlawful for the chief magistrate to take against the people.

The club of the Jacobins was henceforth considered as a proscribed body, but the royalists did not reap the benefit that some of them expected from this change of affairs. The Thermidorians ventured on a complete reconciliation with the Girondins, a party much weakened by the death of its leaders; many had perished on the scaffold; others, like the famous Condorcet, Pethion, Roland, Clavierre, had perished miserably

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by

by suicide or by famine, but still the remnant of this party was supposed to consist of men of better understanding than the other factions. The sentences against Brissot and his friends were declared unjust, and the members who had protested against their illegal imprisonment were readmitted into the assembly. Indulgence was also shewn on their account to emigrants who had fled after the 31st of May; but the most unrelenting severity was observed with respect to all others, though it was known that many had fled after the 2d of September, from terror only, not from enmity. Such cruelty will always be the result of a system of finance founded originally on confiscation,

The poor unhappy boy, decorated with the vain title of king, only to feel more misery than the offspring of a beggar, died on the 9th of June in the temple, worn out with the cruel treatment he had received under the rule of the Jacobins; but the critical moment at which he expired certainly excuses the royalists who entertained still darker suspicions, and added one more to that long list of murders, which  
have

have established a republican government in France.

The last hopes of the Constitutionalists expired with this child, for they well knew the late king's brothers were irreconcilable to their principles. Charette and Stofflet took up arms once more, declaring that they had been basely deceived. Monsieur, under the name of Lewis XVIII. published a declaration at Verona, which I must censure as imprudent, though I cannot with our opposition call it unjust or despotic. It talks indeed of the *old constitution*, but it does not appear to mean arbitrary power, but rather a monarchy limited by a code of fundamental laws, a states-general meeting in three orders, and a body of men like the parlemens, who in the intervals between the states were the guardians of law. I now think even the honest men blameable, who rather chose all the evils of a revolution, than to accept such a constitution *at the first*. But when all those evils had been endured, when the total change had been made, when those orders and those parlemens were grown so universally odious,

no



no sensible man would have thought it possible to have restored them, but would have sought for some *Mezzo-Termino* in which the different parties might agree.

The English fleet having driven its shattered enemies into the port of L'Orient on the 23d of June, a descent was now made on the coast of France, which, could it have been made in 1793, might have been attended with great consequences; but it must be remembered, that the French navy had not then been weakened by two defeats, and the conflagration of Toulon. Several emigrants were landed at Quiberon Bay, under the direction of M. de Puisaye, who is said, by the few survivors, to have been unfit for the military command which he assumed. They were totally routed in the night of the 21st of July, partly through the treachery of French soldiers, whom the emigrants had rashly enlisted from English prisons. The French proceeded with their usual cruelty, and put to death all the emigrants who had surrendered, on  
hopes

hopes being afforded them that their lives would be spared.

This expedition has drawn much censure on our ministers: but those unhappy emigrants had always been crying out—  
 “ Only send us into France without the  
 “ odium of foreign troops, assure the  
 “ French you have no intention to dis-  
 “ member the kingdom, and our cause  
 “ will find assertors.” The English did try the experiment; they did send the Count of Artois himself to land on the Isle Dieu, with the requested declaration, and yet no favourable consequences followed. Nay, it did not even appear that Charette wished a prince of the blood to land: what were his real views it is now impossible to discover, for he was taken and executed in the ensuing winter, and in him the last assertor of French royalty perished.

The restored Girondins, meanwhile, had learnt some prudence from the sad fate of their enthusiastic leaders, and they could find

find a Mezzo Termino, though the royalists could not. It was agreed on all hands that the constitution of 1793 was a mere chaos of democratic anarchy, and a committee was appointed to prepare the plan of a new one. When their report appeared, it was impossible not to exclaim, *Felix si sic omnia!* Had the first national assembly felt the truths which these men have been taught by misfortune, France and Europe might have been spared the evils that now overwhelm them: but they were wise almost too late, and could not, consistently with their former principles, correct the excesses of democracy so much as they appear to have wished. They express themselves doubtfully as to the propriety of any declaration of the rights of man (if it could have been avoided) and greatly dislike that favourite maxim of the first declaration, "Man is born and remains equal in rights," because it endangers the rights of property. Mounier and Neckar had formerly made the same objection, but it was then the fashion to despise their predictions. Some property (though slender) at least the payment of a direct tax equal to the

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the value of three days labour, was required of the voters at the primary assemblies, and the committee proposed that some landed property should be required for a member of this legislature; but this was rejected for an obvious reason, because the convention intended itself to be re-elected.

But the great, the wonderful change of system consisted in relinquishing one principle of the first revolution, as leading, as material as the natural equality of man, that the will of the sovereign people could only be expressed by the medium of a single assembly. Abbe Syeyes had demonstrated this principle by dint of logic and metaphysics, but it appeared, in the end, that experience and history are the better political guides. The committee returned to the system of Harrington, in the last age, and of Adams in the present, warned by the absurd and shocking decrees which one assembly had poured forth in the course of two years, and instituted a council of elders, composed of 250 members, of forty years and upwards, giving it not merely



merely a *suspensive* but an *absolute veto*, over the legislative council of 500. This council of elders had also the right of forcing the assembly to change its residence, and disobedience was ordered to be punished by dissolution. Had a council, armed with such rights, existed from the beginning, the factious Parisians might have been awed, the decrees against nobles and emigrants, the decrees against priests, the declaration of war against Austria, might all have been re-considered without the odium of a royal veto, which gave a plausible occasion to that popular cry—  
 “ Shall the will of one man strike a palsy  
 “ into the will of the nation?” Nor is this language mere theory, for the present council has actually rejected some oppressive laws against priests with perfect security.

The executive power was now entrusted to a directory composed of five members, who were to chuse six inferior ministers. In the first constitution no band of union existed between the legislative and executive power. In England it has been said

the executive power has too much influence over the legislative—the French corrected our error, and the consequence was, that the legislative turned out the executive in ten months. To correct their own error, they have now made the legislative elect the executive, and have artfully introduced a kind of oligarchy into both, by prohibiting all total renewals of these governing powers, and ordering one-third of the legislative to go out every year, and one member of the executive directory to be changed; thus assimilating these two bodies to the nature of our East Indian court of directors. There we all know the effect of an annual *house list*, and it is probable that a *house list* will virtually exist in France. The member who finds himself single amongst five old directors, will be ready to adopt their sentiments, rather than be slighted and brow-beat. Doubtless this arrangement will give more strength to government, but it may too much concentrate all power into the hands of one predominating faction.

This

This constitution was fated like the two others, to be introduced by civil discord. The convention had made itself so many enemies, and dreaded so much the consequence of resigning their seats at once, that it passed a very anti-democratic decree to compel the people to re-elect two-thirds of their own body. They paid the compliment to the primary assemblies of sending them this decree along with the constitution, for their acceptance; but they set the dangerous precedent of first consulting the armies on the frontiers who were drawn out in order of battle by their generals, and accepted the two decrees with acclamations. Thus the poor primary assemblies were left in the situation of the Greek philosopher, who did not chuse to dispute with the master of a hundred legions.

The leading men of Paris who had supported the convention in the month of May, heartily wished, however, to *cashier* it for its past *misconduct*. They raised an opposition to the decree of re-election, made some ineffectual efforts to gain the

regular troops, took up arms themselves in a desultory unmilitary way, and were totally routed on the 7th of October. Had they prevailed, it would have been immediately declared that the *will of the sovereign* was for a free election; but as the *ultimate reason* of cannon balls decided for the convention, it was solemnly pronounced that the majority of the people was on their side. The real sentiments of the primary assemblies are not sufficiently known, for the convention, though often pressed, have never ventured to publish an exact list. From that time, the city of Paris has been entirely under the yoke of the convention; and another of Abbè Syeyes's metaphysical principles, that regular troops should only act against foreign enemies, has been entirely forgot. Regulars slew hundreds of the national guards on the 7th of October, and regulars have supported the revived convention and the directory ever since. From this time, also, the English adherents of French principles ought to abstain from many of their censures against the famous septennial



nial bill, since their favourite convention has adopted nearly a similar measure.

Since this third revolution, the reign of the new governors has been much disturbed at home, as will ever be the case, where the people have been taught that it is lawful on every misconduct to set up a government for themselves. France has had three constitutions since the year 1789, each accepted at the time with seeming transports of applause; and as the real majority of 25 millions is impossible to be counted, it is easy for each party to say—Our constitution was the *true will of the people*, and the acceptance of the others was the work of force and deceit. The constitutionalists of 1791 are supposed to wish the young Duke of Chartres for king, but such a party will never be very formidable. The Jacobins are much more awful, and they hold no constitution to be truly accepted but that of 1793, and make it their standing watch-word. The directory, to support themselves, have suppressed all political clubs, the very measure so much censured in England by our opposition.

position. They live in perpetual fear of conspiracies, of which some may be imaginary, but too many are real, and the last news of September 1796, was an attempt to surprize the camp of Grenelle, on which occasion twelve conspirators were shot, not by sentence of a jury, but of a military commission.

The depreciation of assignats has occasioned great distress amongst the middling class, and a new paper-money, called mandats, is not likely to be more successful.

The directory are to be commended for one act of humanity, the release of the unfortunate daughter of Lewis the Sixteenth: but ambition and violence have marked their conduct towards foreign powers, as much as their predecessors. The new convention begun its reign by irrevocably decreeing the re-union of Belgia and Liege, and the *limits* of the *Rhine* were still the object of their wish. Early in September, 1795, the French troops crossed the Rhine, and took Dusseldorf

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and

and Manheim. But here they met with a repulse; Clairfait drove them back to the opposite shore, then returned to Mentz, attacked, unexpectedly, the French entrenchments, and gained a signal victory on the 29th of October. Wurmser retook Manheim on November the 22d, and, for some time, it appeared that the Austrians had learnt the French tactics of vigorous and constant attack. But this prospect was soon overcast. The retaking of Dusseldorf was neglected, a truce was concluded in the end of December, and Clairfait was dismissed soon after, in consequence of some military and court jealousies. An attempt was made to open a negotiation with the directory, that failed: it may now be said, we had better have persisted in it; but at that time many persons thought the Austrians had still a chance of retaking Flanders by force of arms. These hopes strangely vanished; General Buonaparte carried all before him in Italy, with a ferocity worthy of Alaric or Attila.\* Jourdan

\* The terrified King of Sardinia thought himself obliged to separate his cause from that of the allies,

dan and Moreau were, for some months, as successful in Germany; but the late advantages of the Archduke Charles have driven them again to the banks of the Rhine. But still no prospect appears of concluding the war in such a manner as would formerly have been thought honourable.

Nations as well as kings had often rather be great than happy. The republican rulers of France are on the point of gratifying that people, by extending their empire to those limits which their monarchs aimed at for 300 years, and never could attain, whilst, at the same time, they have concluded with Spain a treaty similar to that family compact which was the only boast of Lewis the Fifteenth's reign.—Here, then, an old English Whig may be excused for dropping the pen, full of regret for the unexpected consequences that

and conclude a most humiliating and disgraceful peace, resigning all pretensions to Nice and Savoy, and abandoning to the French republic those passages over the Alps which the kings of France had never been able entirely to secure.



have resulted from the *French revolution*.

A few short hints of advice may yet be allowed to a disinterested volunteer.—Let those declaimers, who are perpetually repeating sentences on the unlawfulness of war, and the cruelty of sending troops to languish in unwholesome climes, try their eloquence upon the French directory, and convince them that it is unlawful to recline on beds of down within a regal palace, and feast upon delicacies, whilst the poor soldier is starving in a camp, to procure them contributions to keep up the value of their mandates, or pictures, and statues, to gratify their vanity. Let them tell their friends that it is contrary to the rights of man to bind together an absolute monarchy and a democratic republic, to fight each other's battles, just or unjust—as long as they shall exist. If our tribe of *peace-making* romancers and poets decline this *consistent* embassy, let them not be surprized, if we exclaim, with the generous young Briton, in Caractacus—

“—T.

" ————— To Rome with *reason*;  
 " Try if 'twill bring her deluging ambition  
 " Into the level course of right and justice:  
 " But pray thee do not *reason* from my breast  
 " Its inbred loyalty; that holy flame,  
 " Howe'er eclips'd by Rome's black influence  
 " In vulgar minds, ought still to brighten our's."

For the people at large, they would do well to recollect, although the war has been unsuccessful, there was at first the greatest reason to expect a happier event, and also that in most instances the allied armies have failed rather than our own. If we had suffered Flanders and Holland to be conquered without opposition, the French government, to employ their numerous and dreaded foldiers, would probably have begun hostilities, and we should have been but where we are, with more danger to our Asiatic empire, and the reputation both at home and abroad, of pusillanimity.

If the nation should determine to call out for peace, let it recollect the termination of the American war, and not a second time turn out a minister for making a  
bad

bad peace, when the impatience of the people had put it out of his power to make a good one. Englishmen may praise or condemn Mr. Pitt at their leisure; let them only beware how they put any confidence in men who avowedly intrigue with a nation which has so often professed its wish to annihilate our commerce: let them observe what Holland has gained by banishing the house of Nassau, and resolve not to quarrel with our princes upon slight occasions; for it is a certain truth, that allegiance to the house of Brunswic is our best security against becoming a tributary province to France.

Oct. 1, 1796.

**ADDENDA.**

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## ADDENDA.

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### I.

[Page 120.]

**T**HE unlucky plan of government presented by the king to the States, has never had common justice done it, because it was presented at too late a period, and in an impolitic manner. Playfair, though an enemy to the French revolution, speaks of it severely, and objects to one article in particular, as favourable to despotism in which I cannot see any such intention.

“ Le roi veut que les loix qu’il aura fait  
“ promulguer pendant la tenue, et d’apres  
“ l’avis ou selon le vœu des Etats-Generaux  
“ n’eprouvent pour leur enregistrement  
“ aucun retardement ni aucun obstacle  
“ dans toute l’etendue de son royaume.”

The



The negative power claimed by the parlements over laws, was grown odious both to the crown and the popular party. This article only says, that laws promulgated by the king during the sitting and according to the advice of the States-General, shall be enregistered without delay or obstacle, which signifies no more than if an English writer was to say, that the twelve judges have no power over an act passed by king, lords, and commons. It seems also as if Mr. Playfair had been too ready to give credit to all the hateful tales told by French writers of the licentious or cruel laws established by the feudal system ; tales, whose odious aspect protects them from a long examination. One custom often mentioned by wits and comic poets, has been examined by Sir David Dalrymple, in a dissertation at the end of his Annals of Scotland, who brings many arguments to prove that it *never existed at all*, and that two or three laws of very different tendency have been mistaken for it by superficial antiquarians. It would not perhaps be impossible to explain a horrid, cruel custom which Playfair, in his History of Jacobinism,

seems

seems to believe. Perhaps some vassal was obliged, according to the medical notions of the time, to cut up one of his beasts whenever it was wanted for his master's health, and by dint of barbarous Latin and barbarous French, the deed was at last interpreted as if the lord had a right to cut the vassal in two. I repeat it again, that these customs have not been sufficiently investigated by impartial antiquarians, and that the frequent repetition of them in the early revolutionary writers looks very like one of those *strokes of ability* worthy of Tippoo Saib or of Mirabeau.

These criticisms are not inserted from any wish to censure a deserving author. The ablest men are liable to inaccuracies, and if any such are found in this abridgment of history, the Author willingly submits them to the correction of the well-informed.

## II.

[Page 134.]

THE note which is to be found in the 81st and 82d pages of Mirabeau's *Doutes sur la Liberté de l'Escaut*, is too long for insertion; but as it strongly marks his character, the reader must be told that it contains an elaborate justification of Tip-poo Saib's cruelty to General Mathews, and his army, on the ground of retaliation for their cruelties committed at the taking of Onore. He uses these words: "The  
 " soldiers, animated by the example and  
 " by the orders of their commander, gave  
 " themselves up to the most odious ex-  
 " cesses." It is necessary to observe, that some writers have denied the excesses committed by our army; and that not one of the writers, the most inveterate against the English East India Company, had ever hinted before that Mathews ordered his soldiers to kill women and children. That unfortunate general has indeed been accused of avarice, but Mirabeau alone accuses him of cruelty. Mirabeau proceeds ]  
 to

to describe the dreadful march of the English prisoners into the interior of the country, and how they perished through the ill-treatment of their conductors. He then coolly adds, “ Mais l'idée de Tippoo Saib “ n'en est pas moins celle d'un homme tres “ habile ;” ‘ The idea of Tippoo Saib is ‘ not the less the idea of a very able man ;’ because, as he explains himself, such fights as these would teach the Indians to despise their tyrants. These words contain the analysis of the moral principles on which Mirabeau, and likewise Barnave, Lameth, Syeyes, Brissot, Condorcet, conducted the first French revolution. To inflame the quiet peasants, by carrying about asses dressed up in the paraphernalia of nobility, and by telling them (no matter whether true or false) that the feudal claims of their lords extended to their wives, their property, their lives, was “ l'Idée d'un homme “ tres habile.” But it was a greater mark of ability still to teach them to tear to pieces the dead bodies of an officer or a gentleman, and, by the confession of their own writers, sometimes drink their blood, on the same principle that it was so able an idea



idea in Tippoo Saib, to shew to the Indians the English dying under fatigue and blows, to teach them how easy it was to shake off the yoke of their tyrants. On a similar principle, Brissot proposed and carried the pardon of Jourdan, and other murderers at Avignon; and by this step lost all his right to accuse Robespierre for defending the bloody 2d of September. The works of Mirabeau were open to every one's reading; their ferocious principles were undisguised; the part that he had in the early French revolution was notorious; the Christian divines who celebrated that event are therefore inexcusable for not having adverted in time to the dangers of such a deliberate system of political cruelty.

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### III.

[Page 315.]

THE disputes that have taken place between the National Assemblies of France and the colonies are of too complicated a nature to be discussed in a note, but it

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would

would be worth the while of some author more interested, and better informed on the subject, to consider whether they have not originated in the desire of the mother country to legislate for its colonies, and to reduce the colonial representative assemblies into mere executive administrations. The first constituent assembly had indeed the pretence of including some members from the West Indies, who were always brow-beaten and contemned; but the present Convention has voted away the property that planters had in the labour of their slaves, without having a single representative of the whites to offer his opinion. The laws of nature authorised their decree, it was said; and so the laws of nature were brought in to authorise the opening of the Scheldt, but the arbitrary power of France was probably the real motive in both cases. The leaders of the assembly might think that the blacks and mulattoes, from their ignorance, their inexperience, and their gratitude to that power which had allowed them to tyrannise over the whites, would bend with implicit obedience to every decree and every commissioner sent from Paris. If  
such

such was their motive, report says they have already been disappointed by the negroes of St. Domingo refusing to return to their labour. An important consequence may be drawn from these reflections. The advocates for reform in England have always supposed that the corrupt influence of the court alone drew on the war with America, and that if the people of England had enjoyed an equal and unbiaſſed representation, they never would have pretended to legislate for their colonies. The people of France did enjoy this excellent representation, and, ſetting aſide all their other enormities, we find them as ready as the courtiers of a monarch to reduce their colonies to a ſtate of unconditional ſubmiſſion.

Let all reformers profit by this example, and learn that it is not ſufficient to ſhew that an exiſting government is guilty of errors, they ought to prove that the ſpeculative government they recommend does not contain the ſeeds of error ſimilar to, perhaps greater than, thoſe they condemn.

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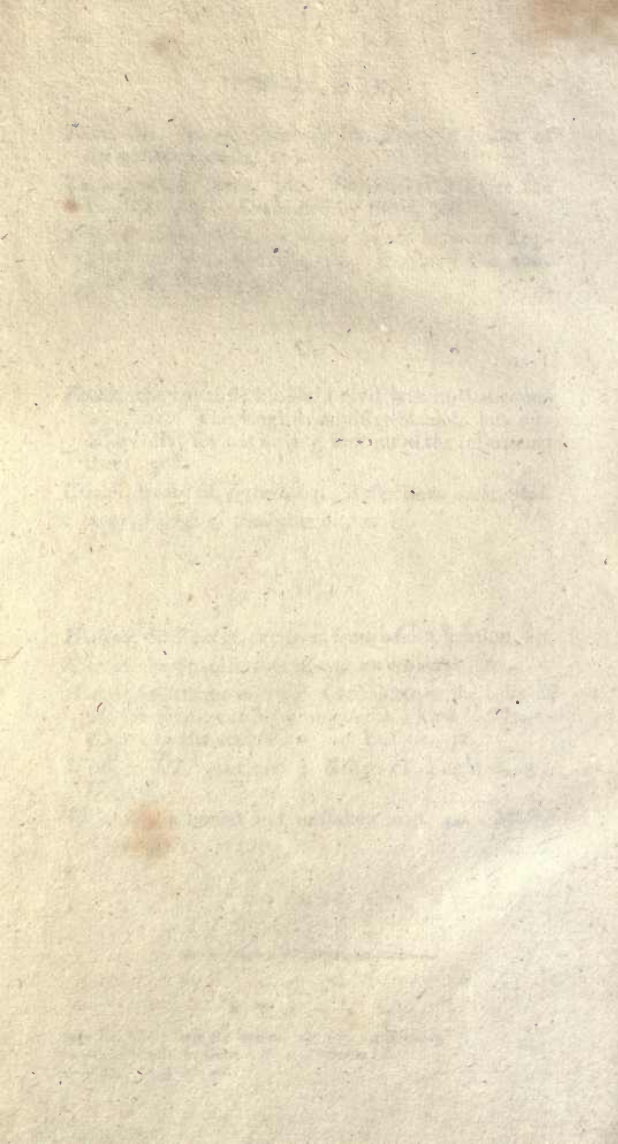
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